

**Personnel Transfers and the Geographical Mobility of
Population: The Case of Japan**

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Abstract

Personnel transfers within the internal labour markets of large multilocal organizations are shown to be the largest single cause of interregional population migration in contemporary Japan. The challenges which such transfers present to conventional migration theory are examined in the context of Japanese personnel management practices, especially the so-called "lifetime employment system". A typology of transfers under this system is developed, and a typical pattern of career mobility described.

The incidence of personnel transfers is examined in respect of industry, company size and the personal characteristics of transferees, and the locus of real decision-making power is explored. The temporal and spatial characteristics of interregional transfers are described in detail.

Two case studies illustrate the incidence of transfers in stable organizations and in industries undergoing structural transformation. The first case study, of the Ministry of Labour, reveals intricate relationships between geographical mobility and the career paths of senior government officials, while the second, which examines personnel transfers within the Nippon Steel Corporation, shows how transfers are incorporated within broader policies for structural adjustment.

The housing needs of transferees are often met directly by the employer through the provision of company housing, a distinctive feature of the Japanese case, as is the prevalence of "partial migration", in which the primary migrant (the transferee) leaves his/her family behind for the duration of a posting. These aspects of the Japanese transfer system are examined in detail, before a concluding chapter sets the agenda for future research.

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Errata

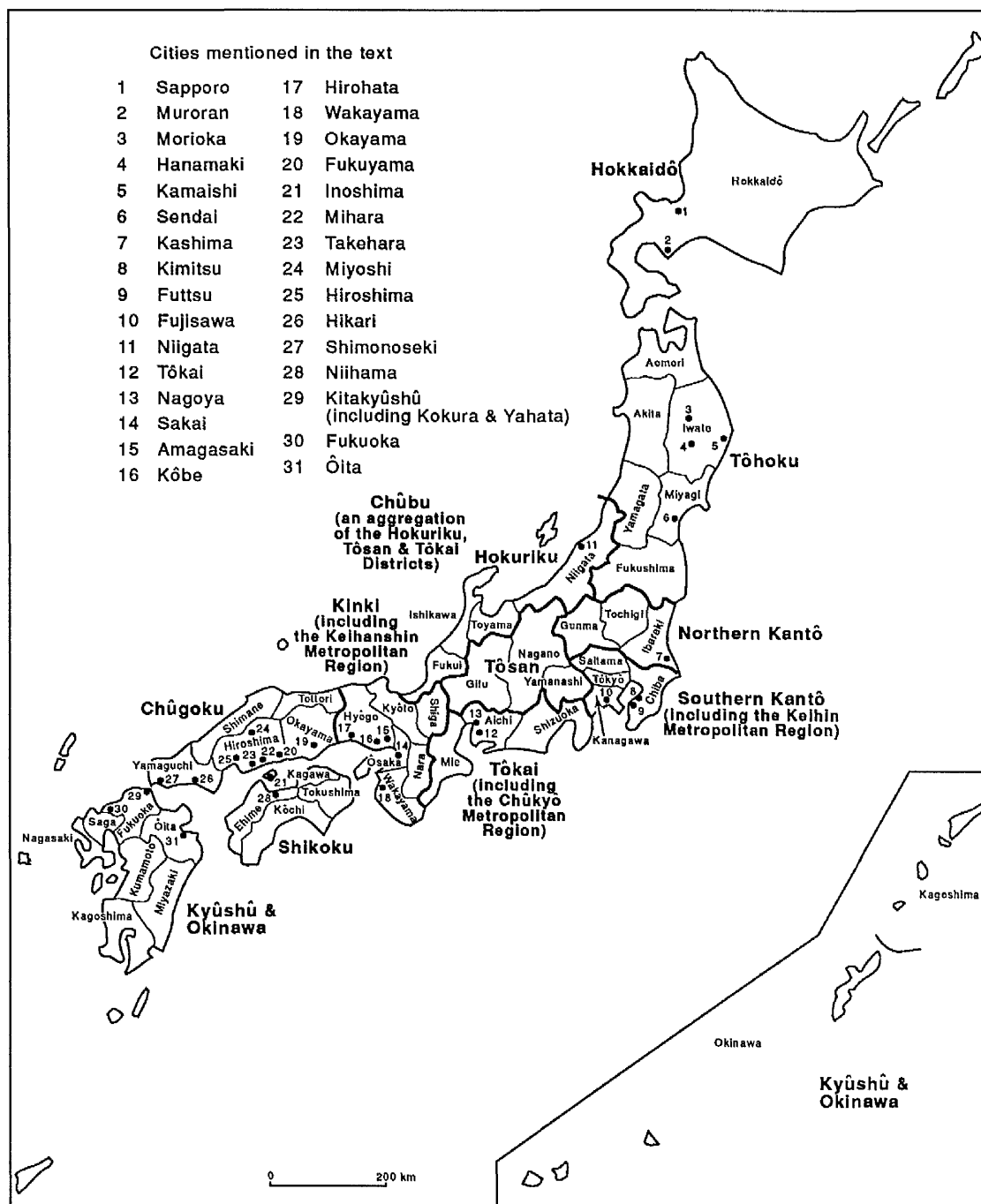
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Page 19, Line 9	know	known
Page 28, Line 11	fragmentory	fragmentary
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Page 63, Table 3.1	[notes]	[delete one "forestry"]
Page 64, Table 3.2	[notes]	[delete one "forestry"]
Page 65, Table 3.3	[column totals]	The total % of companies implementing personnel transfers is 47.0; the percentage implementing personnel transfers that required a change of residence is 16.9
Page 72, Line 5	a well	as well
Page 77, Table 3.10	childrens'	children's
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Page 85, Line 26	times or	times of
Page 89, Line 10	at yet	as yet
Page 93, Line 4	that	than
Page 96, Line 3	Table 3.14	Table 4.3
Page 109, Line 25	is forms	it forms
Page 123, Line 12	prefectures	prefecture
Page 146, Line 35	could controlled	could be controlled
Page 153, Lines 2-3	the western Japan	western Japan
Page 154, Lines 26-27	investments located	investments
Page 155, Line 5	has been	had been
Page 159, Line 35	association	associated
Page 161, Line 13	Yahata	Yawata
Page 161, Line 16	Yahata	Yawata
Page 162, Line 2	Fig. 5.5	Figure 6.5
Page 163, Line 1	Fig. 6.6	Figure 6.6
Page 164, Line 2	Yahata	Yawata
Page 165, Line 15	issues	issue
Page 168, Line 8	Chapter 6	Chapter 7
Page 171, Line 12	are	as
Page 189, Line 23	ibid.	Hall (1988)
Page 200, Table 8.1	Kenkyûjo, 1986	Kenkyûjo (1986)
Page 201, Table 8.2	Chôsabû, 1991	Chôsabû (1991)
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Page 202, Table 8.3	Yûseishô, 1988	Yûseishô (1988)
Page 217, Line 30	transfers more	transfers are more
Page 228, Line 10	role women	role of women
Page 228, Line 12	some many	so many

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The thesis is dedicated to my father, George Alexander Wiltshire, who passed away in 1984.

Japan: Districts, Prefectures and Cities Mentioned in the Text



Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 The objective of the thesis

Simply stated, the objective of this thesis is to identify and explain those characteristics of personnel transfers in Japan which have a bearing on the interregional migration of population. It is a thesis with a strong regional orientation, rooted in Japanese demography and economic institutions, and it seeks to establish specific new knowledge about that country. There is also a wider objective however, which is to contribute to the growing literature within the field of migration studies which stresses the importance of institutional structures and behaviour as determinants of migration processes. In this latter context the Japanese example assumes more than idiographic significance, for it provides striking illustrations of processes which are common to other developed countries as well.

The idea for this thesis and its justification stem from an issue which emerged as a concern amongst Japanese and foreign scholars in the 1970s, namely the problem of understanding why net interregional migration in Japan had decreased so rapidly, or to put it another way, why it was that interregional migration had become "inefficient". This question will serve as a convenient point of departure for a brief introduction to the facts of interregional migration in postwar Japan, but it will also lead us to an important conclusion - that interregional migration in Japan is inefficient in large part because of the way in which it is organized. Hence it is to the mechanics of this organization - the deliberate orchestration of population flows through carefully defined channels - that the core of the thesis is devoted.

The issue which sparked off this thesis is itself by no means a uniquely Japanese concern: Da Vanzo and Morrison (1983), for example, point to similarly low rates of net population redistribution in the United States. It is just one manifestation of the international phenomenon of "counterurbanization" which emerged in the 1970s and has since attracted much attention throughout the developed world (for which see Champion, 1989). Similarly, the realization that personnel transfers might be a key component of the new migration trends arose in several other countries at around the same time, including Britain and Australia (Johnson and Salt, 1980; McKay and Whitelaw, 1977). In subsequent chapters care will be taken to spell out the wider contexts, both geographical and theoretical, within which the Japanese example must be appraised. We begin, however, from the precursor to this thesis, which is set in a specifically Japanese context.

1.2 Inefficiency and interregional migration in Japan

In what sense can migration be considered "inefficient"? The answer to this question depends upon our understanding of what migration is supposed to accomplish, a matter on which there is much scope for disagreement, for every migration stream is a diverse mosaic of individuals and groups, each acting as best they can in accordance with their own values and aspirations and in response to circumstances only partially within their control. No wonder then that the search for "laws" of migration triggered a century ago by the work of Ravenstein (for which see Lee, 1966) has proved so fruitless, for no generalization can hold true beyond those who share similar desires and a common fate.

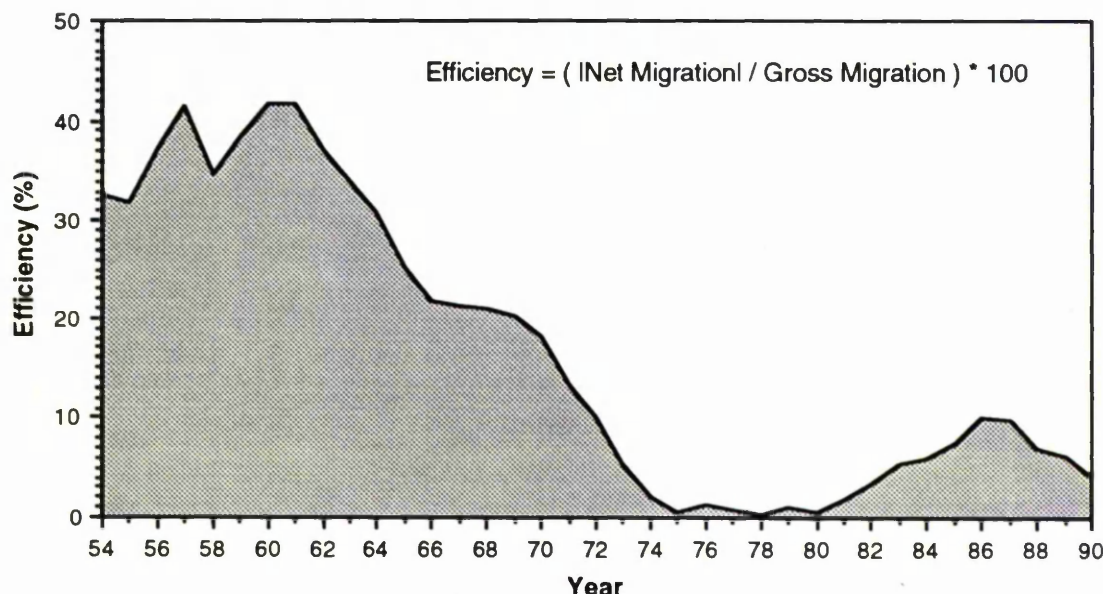
From a distance, however, migration can be viewed dispassionately as a mechanism for correcting "imbalances" in the distribution of population. In this naïve, generalized sense, migration does its job if people succeed in moving from areas where they are in "surplus" to areas of population "deficit", however defined. From this flows a simple definition of efficiency based on the net result of movements between surplus and deficit areas: the greater the resulting shift in population in favour of the latter, the greater the efficiency of migration.

Convenient as this definition may seem, it nevertheless begs an important question, for we still have to define the notions of surplus and deficit, which brings us straight back to the purpose of migration. We must go one step further to devise a neutral definition of efficiency - by abandoning even the concepts of surplus and deficit in favour of the pure facts about migration quantities. At this level, migration is seen as efficient if the net redistribution of population achieved by it is large in relation to the total volume of movement taking place. This is a simple mathematical relationship between two numbers: the number of people moving from A to B, and the number moving from B to A. And it is in this sense that interregional migration in Japan must be judged "inefficient".

As evidence for this assertion consider Figure 1.1, which plots the efficiency of migration streams between the metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions of Japan over the past three decades. In 1954, when the publication of appropriate data began, the index of migration efficiency already stood above thirty per cent, rising to a peak in excess of forty per cent in the early 1960s, by which time for every seven hundred people who moved into one of the three metropolitan regions, around three hundred moved out. From this point the index collapsed - to below twenty-five per cent by 1965 and below five per cent by 1973 - since when it struggled for more than a decade to get above five per cent again. Five per cent efficiency means this: when five hundred and twenty-five people move in one direction, they meet four hundred and seventy-five people coming the other way - a very inefficient way of redistributing population by any standard. And while

efficiency recovered somewhat during the early 1980s, it still peaked at barely 10 per cent in 1986, since when its decline has resumed. Since the mid 1970s between 1.5 and 2 million people have been involved in these migration streams each year. What the efficiency index tells us is that all this movement has had only a very minor effect on the underlying distribution of the population: most migrants would appear to be doing little more than going around in circles.

Figure 1.1 Efficiency of migration between metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions, Japan, 1954-90



Note: The metropolitan prefectures are Saitama, Chiba, Tōkyō, Kanagawa, Aichi, Mie, Kyōto, Ōsaka and Hyōgo. The efficiency index has been modified from that employed by Wiltshire and Abe (1978, p. 358), to discount the direction of the net flow. The concept of migration efficiency was developed by Lee (1966).

Source: Derived from data in Sōmuchō, *Jūmin Kinhon Daichō Jinkō Idō Hōkoku Nenpō*. (Annual).

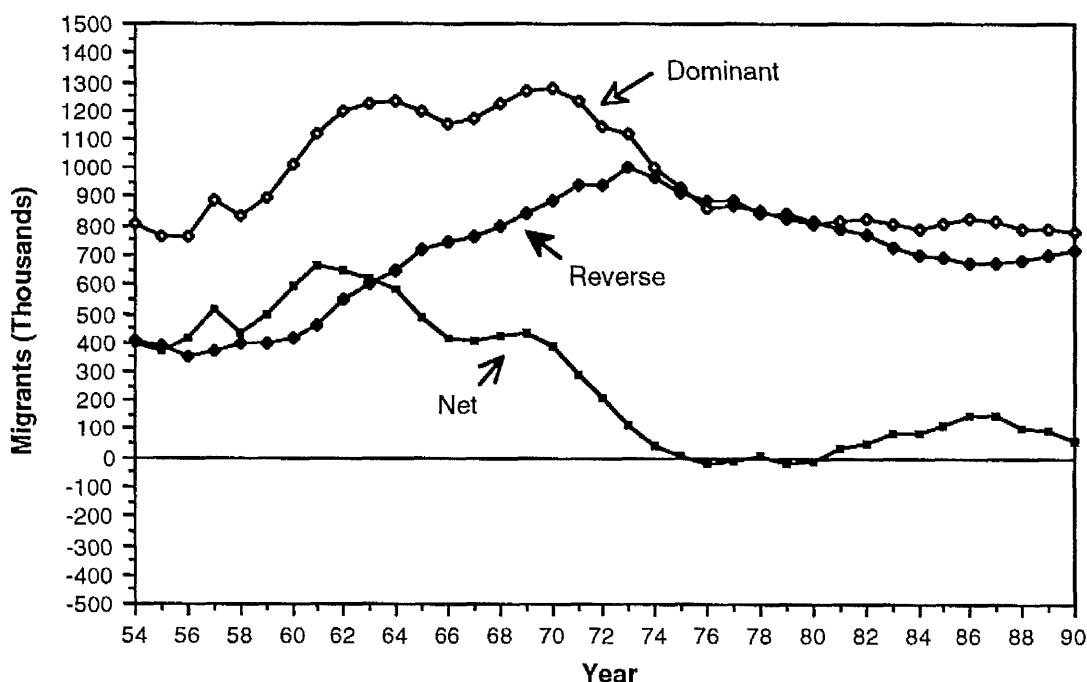
To demonstrate inefficiency is easy, but to explain it is much harder, for this crude index is hedged by caveats and subjectivities in both technical and substantive flavours which need to be considered before the case for organized migration is made.

On the technical side, there is the thorny question of boundary definition. How should "metropolitan" and "non-metropolitan" regions be defined at any one time, and are two regions enough? How can an abstract concept of the metropolitan be reconciled with the rigidities (and coarse scale) of the administrative boundaries within which statistics are collected? How can one boundary line be drawn to define what may well be several different migration systems, each with its own locational logic and spatial structure? These are ever-present issues for which there is rarely a convincing answer. Consider an example: suburbanization. Draw the metropolitan boundary too tightly, and an artificial

exodus from the metropolis appears. Draw the boundary loose, and real rural-urban migration is disguised.

What then if the boundaries on the map are fixed but the city on the ground is transformed over time by, amongst other things, the very migration one is attempting to measure? If cities are expanding and the boundaries are not, the result will be an artificial exodus of suburbanites, which matters in the context of this discussion, because the result would be a decline in migration efficiency as suburbanization cancels out broader scale urbanization - a decline just like the one revealed in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.2 Migration between metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions, Japan, 1954-90



Note: The metropolitan prefectures are Saitama, Chiba, Tôkyô, Kanagawa, Aichi, Mie, Kyôto, Ôsaka and Hyôgo.

Source: Derived from data in Sômuchô, *Jûmin Kinhon Daichô Jinkô Idô Hôkoku Nenpô*. (Annual).

And then there are the substantive issues, which bring us to what the data actually show and to the extensive literature on interregional migration in postwar Japan (for which see, for example, Vining (1975), Nanjo, Kawashima and Kuroda (1982), Yamaguchi (1984) and Tsuya and Kuroda (1989)). The efficiency index of Figure 1.1 cannot be interpreted without reference to the data which underlie it - the dominant migration stream (to the metropolitan regions) and the reverse migration stream (from the metropolitan regions) - which are shown in Figure 1.2. The proximate cause of the collapse in migration efficiency is now clear: while the dominant stream reached a plateau early in the 1960s, the reverse stream increased year by year right up to the early 1970s,

after which the volume of both streams dropped away more or less in tandem. But what of the deeper causes, those which determine the volumes of these two streams?

In the 1960s and early 1970s, explanation of interregional migration patterns in Japan seemed a comparatively straightforward matter. The leading component of interregional migration was the drift of population from rural to urban areas to satisfy the burgeoning demand for labour in the latter: migration was the geographical manifestation of the intersectoral shift of labour from primary to secondary and tertiary activity. During this high growth period, when GNP growth rates regularly exceeded ten per cent per annum, public and private investment was concentrated within the Pacific Coast Belt from Tôkyô Bay to Fukuoka, and particularly in the three great metropolitan regions (centred on Tôkyô, Ôsaka and Nagoya). This was a natural consequence both of the locational necessities facing the leading manufacturing sectors at that time (access to deep water for raw material imports, access to markets etc.), and of the deliberate effects of government policy: the National Income Doubling Plan (so-called Ikeda Plan) of 1960 initially called for concentration of industrial investment in the existing industrial regions so as to maximize the utilization of existing public infrastructure investments. There were countervailing policies of course, such as the New Industrial Cities Law of 1962, which attempted to promote industrial decentralization, but these were largely ineffective and palliative in nature. By the late 1960s, and despite large net inflows of population, severe labour shortages had emerged in Japan's metropolitan regions.

Studies of interregional migration from this period relied upon either the aggregates of social physics or the individuals of microeconomics, the latter carefully weighing the costs and benefits of moving in the light of known wage levels and employment opportunities at origin and destination. "Explanation" was of the statistical variety, born of the regression equation and the significance test. And it was the net flow which mattered, and which disappeared whenever regional attributes converged. In short, the approach to interregional migration was very much grounded in the neoclassical model of the labour market. Papers by Suzuki (1969) and Tachi (1971) are typical of the genre, and illustrate that this mode of analysis was as popular in Japan during the 1960s as it was elsewhere in the industrialized world.

By the late 1960s, however, attention began to focus on another characteristic of postwar interregional migration in Japan - the steady increase in the volume of migration from metropolitan to non-metropolitan regions (the reverse migration stream). It was the eminent demographer Kuroda Toshio (Kuroda, 1969) who first discussed the implications of this trend. He suggested that the increase in reverse migration evident in Figure 1.2 would eventually overtake the stagnant (and subsequently declining) dominant migration stream, leading to a net outflow of population from the metropolitan regions.

To this phenomenon he gave the name "population U-Turn", on the assumption that a high proportion of the people in the reverse migration stream were return migrants.

This concept was immediately seized upon by the Japanese press, who dispatched reporters to the mountains in search of the thousands of people who had been assumed by now to have fled the city to achieve a new oneness with nature, and by politicians, notably Tanaka Kakuei (subsequently the Prime Minister), who took advantage of the idea to further his own political designs. This was a period in which the issue of pollution had come strongly to the fore: hence it is understandable that the press, the politicians and the general public put increased disaffection with urban life together with Kuroda's findings and assumed that some great exodus had begun. In the academic world too, there was heated debate over the causes and consequences of the "U-Turn", a debate somewhat undermined at first by terminological inexactitude and a paucity of hard data. The definition of "U-Turn" was broadened to include a wide variety of movement types - including return migration from Ôsaka to Tôkyô, hardly a prime example metropolitan to non-metropolitan drift - and broken down into sub-species defined by a proliferation of letter shapes: "J-Turn", "S-Turn", even "O-Turn" (Wiltshire, 1979a).

Figure 1.2 shows, however, that there was in fact no sudden upsurge in reverse migration in the late 1960s, and in any case, the impact of the oil crisis of the early 1970s was to bring about a dramatic fall in migration in both directions, though admittedly with a slight net balance in favour of the non-metropolitan regions of Japan. Instead of Kuroda's "population U-Turn", the 1970s and 1980s have been marked by an equalization of the two streams, in which net migration in either direction is but a tiny fraction of total movement: that is, the efficiency of migration has been low.

Why then has this equalization taken place? Is it that the two streams just happen by chance to be in balance, or are there some systematic links between the dominant and reverse streams which ensure that they cancel out?

Consider first the possibility of an accidental balancing. This would require some combination of a decrease in the strength of the forces underlying the dominant stream and an increase in the strength of the forces promoting reverse migration. In fact, there are good reasons to suspect that both have occurred. As regards the weakening of the dominant stream, part of the answer lies in the massive rural to urban drift of the 1950s and 1960s, which led to depopulation in many rural areas and hence the undermining of local population reproductive power. By the late 1960s the volume of out-migration from many of these areas had already become unsustainable from the residual population. This made it inevitable that the volume of the dominant migration stream would decrease. Other factors thought to have contributed to a reduced dominant stream include a higher

level of employment opportunities in non-metropolitan regions, as a result both of factory relocation and of the growth of the service and retail sectors in provincial towns and cities, both of which helped to retain population in non-metropolitan regions, and improvements in provincial cultural and recreational amenities and transport facilities.

As for the reverse migration stream, the U-Turn debate has thrown up a long list of factors which have supposedly stimulated it. Mera (1978) and others cite such factors as intensified public concern over quality of life issues stimulated by the pollution problems of the 1960s, underlying changes in values (including the switch from work-oriented to family-oriented values known as "my-homism"), industrial decentralization (which increased the chances of finding employment in non-metropolitan Japan), real income equalization (caused by a convergence of nominal wage rates and inflation in living costs, and especially of housing costs, in the main urban centres), and the general slowdown of economic growth in the 1970s, which we would expect to stimulate a higher level of return migration amongst disappointed former in-migrants.

This last factor is particularly interesting because it does suggest a systematic linkage between the dominant and reverse streams: after all, one cannot become a return migrant within the reverse stream without first having been a migrant in the dominant stream. In this way a "stock" of potential return migrants may have built up in the metropolitan regions, to be released at certain intervals in quantities that reflected current economic conditions as well as the absolute size of the stock itself. This mechanism would help to account for the fact that reverse migration increased steadily throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, even after the dominant stream had begun to fall, and why they subsequently fell in tandem rather than achieving a radical switch of the type predicted by Kuroda.

If we add in to this mix the likely consequences of progressive underbounding (as a result of which increasing amounts of suburbanization are included in the reverse migration statistics), then certainly there are valid reasons to expect that some of the observed equalization has been a matter of chance - either in the matching of separate and independent forces or the accident of appropriate rates of return migration. What proportion can be accounted for in this way, however, depends very much upon the extent to which the factors thought to underlie the dominant and reverse streams also account for the high absolute or gross levels of migration which have persisted even after equalization. This is an empirical question, and can be answered only by recourse to data - to which we shall turn in a moment.

Before doing so, however, let us consider the alternative explanation: that convergence and low migration efficiencies have been underpinned by systematic

linkages between the dominant and reverse migration streams. We have already discussed one systematic linkage - the release of return migrants from accumulated stocks, though a strong element of chance would be involved in tuning the release rates to precisely the correct levels to ensure sustained equalization of the two streams. But what other systematic linkages exist?

One linkage which has already been explored elsewhere by the present writer involves the impact of the Japanese higher education system (Wiltshire, 1980). With a high proportion of the nation's universities concentrated in the major urban areas, and especially in Metropolitan Tôkyô, and a high proportion of senior high school students entering university each year, it is inevitable that migration occurs on a large scale at the time of university entrance, with a big influx into Tôkyô especially, while simultaneously there is a reverse flow of new graduates who have completed their education and are returning home. Needless to say, the numbers are not necessarily equal, since a certain proportion of graduates (especially the more able or the graduates from the prestige institutions) will tend to remain in Tôkyô, but certainly the exchange mechanism is there.

The other mechanism however, and *a priori* the best candidate for generating a large base flow of interregional migrants to little net effect, is personnel transfers. The idea that migration associated with personnel transfers might underpin much of the so-called "U-Turn Phenomenon" was first proposed by Hisaeda (1972) in a thoughtful but much-criticized paper (see, for example, Okada, 1976). At the time Hisaeda wrote there was very little data available to quantify the relative importance of transferees within migration streams, and indeed this was very much a novel theme, not just with reference to Japan but in the context of the geographical literature as a whole: Keown's landmark paper (which introduced personnel transfers into population geography) was itself not published until 1971. In subsequent years, however, reliable data on the scale of personnel transfers have become available, both from ordinary migration surveys and from analysis of personnel records and field research, and an associated literature has developed which includes papers by the present author (Wiltshire 1979b, 1983) as well as some excellent Japanese contributions (for which see especially Itô et. al., 1979).

Once again, however, the question of the relative importance of these systematic mechanisms as an explanation of low migration efficiencies is a matter of empirical debate rather than consistency of reasoning. Having reviewed the arguments on both sides, it is time to match theories with facts.

1.3 The anatomy of migration streams

During the early 1970s, when the U-Turn debate was at its height, there were insufficient data available on the general causes of migration to allow a sensible judgement to be made on the relative importance of various migration factors. Subsequently however this deficiency has been remedied through a number of sources, of which two examples will suffice: a survey undertaken by the National Land Agency in 1980-81 and three surveys undertaken by Tôkyô Metropolitan Government in 1976, 1981 and 1986 (for technical details of which, see Appendix A).

In both cases, the approach to identifying the "cause" of migration was simple and rather superficial: an individual (usually the head of household) was presented with a menu of possible explanations for his or her migration after the event, and was asked to cite just one of the options on offer as the major reason for having moved. The menus included items such as "to start a new job", "to change jobs", "because of marriage", "educational reasons", "to live with parents", "for better housing conditions", "personnel transfer", and the inevitable "other".

Data such as these must be approached with great caution, for they gloss over the sheer complexity of many migration decisions, in which it is not just the number of factors at work which matters but the strength and timing of each. Besides this conceptual problem, there is the question of how the various answers on offer are likely to have been interpreted by the respondents - and how honest their answers are likely to have been. The answer "to live with parents", for example, could cover a multitude of sins and embarrassments, such as unemployment, crime (whether as perpetrator or victim), an emotional breakdown, or even general inadequacy, as well as such laudable objectives as looking after one's ageing parents. Indeed, the fact that a gloss can be put on this response could make it particularly attractive to the self-deluding misfit. Nevertheless, there is no reason to suppose that purely dishonest responses form a high percentage of the total, and in any case, most of the reasons on offer do cover the occasions in the life of any individual when migration is most likely to occur: starting university, starting work, changing jobs, retirement and so on.

With these caveats in mind, let us examine the data. First, consider the results of the National Land Agency survey, which are shown in Table 1.1. The table reveals some large differences between the dominant and reverse streams, as well as a key similarity. The most important difference lies in the overall level of employment-related migration, which is much higher in the dominant stream. Conversely, the share of the reverse flow accounted for by non-employment-related reasons is higher - but not by so much, because of a substantially larger residual group covered by the nebulous "other" category.

Another large difference between the two streams lies in the role of educational factors, which in this context generally mean entry into a university, junior college or the like. This emerges as the third largest single factor attracting population to the metropolitan regions of Japan - and in particular to Southern Kantô, where Japan's universities are overwhelmingly concentrated.

Table 1.1 Interprefectural migration by type and reason, Japan, 1980-81

Unit: % of total migration

	Migration <i>from</i> the provinces <i>to</i> the three metropolitan regions (DOMINANT STREAM)	Migration <i>to</i> the provinces <i>from</i> the three metropolitan regions (REVERSE STREAM)
Employment-related reasons	61.9	46.6
of which:		
To seek work	5.6	0.7
To start a new job/change jobs	26.8	15.7
Personnel transfer	29.5	30.2
Not employment-related reasons	28.6	30.2
of which:		
Educational reasons	14.0	2.8
Because of marriage	9.8	5.7
For better housing conditions	1.6	2.9
To live with parents	3.2	18.8
Other reasons	9.5	23.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Note: The "three metropolitan regions" are defined on the basis of commuting: to qualify for inclusion, a municipality must have had at least 3% of its 1975 Census population commute to work in one or more of the major cities of the Southern Kantô, Tôkai and Kinki districts.
Source: Calculated from data in Kokudochô (1982).

The key similarity, on the other hand, lies in the role of personnel transfers. This emerges as the single most important reason for migration in both streams and, significantly, accounts for almost exactly the same proportion of migration in either direction. Since the two streams are approximately in balance in absolute terms, this implies that the flows of transferees more or less cancel each other out. Transfers also account for 47.7% of known employment-related migration in the dominant stream, and an extraordinary 64.8% of known employment-related migration in the reverse stream.

The Tôkyô data (Table 1.2) are not directly comparable with those from the National Land Agency survey, since they refer to different areas at both origin and destination and are based on a slightly different menu of migration factors. Nevertheless, the story they tell is remarkably similar. Migration for employment-related reasons is again more

important in the dominant stream than in the reverse, while the "other" category is more important in the reverse stream, though in both cases the differences are rather less extreme than those suggested by the National Land Agency survey. Meanwhile, as we might expect given the concentration of universities in Tōkyō, educational factors emerge as an even more important component of the dominant stream, accounting for around one fifth of all migration into Tōkyō in each survey.

Table 1.2 Interprefectural migration by type and reason, Tōkyō, 1976-86

Unit: % of total migration

	Migration <i>from</i> the provinces <i>to</i> Tōkyō (DOMINANT STREAM)			Migration <i>to</i> the provinces <i>from</i> Tōkyō (REVERSE STREAM)		
	1976	1981	1986	1976	1981	1986
Employment-related reasons	62.4	58.5	65.8	54.5	56.2	58.5
of which:						
To seek work	2.9	0.5	1.0	3.3	1.1	0.7
To start a new job/change jobs	26.8	24.2	24.7	20.7	22.6	19.2
Personnel transfer	32.7	33.8	40.1	30.5	32.5	38.6
Not employment-related reasons	31.5	33.9	26.6	26.3	28.8	25.4
of which:						
Educational reasons	19.4	23.1	17.6	8.6	8.6	8.0
Because of marriage	6.9	6.0	5.8	7.0	6.3	5.9
For better housing conditions	2.9	1.7	1.8	3.7	3.3	2.0
Other reasons	6.1	7.6	7.6	19.2	15.0	16.1
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The provinces consist of Hokkaidō, Tōhoku, Chūgoku, Shikoku and Kyūshū: Hokuriku is excluded since its data are aggregated with those of Chūbu and the Kinki district in the original.
Source: Calculated from data in Tōkyō-to (1978, 1983, 1988).

As for personnel transfers, once again they emerge not only as the single most important cause of migration, but also as a factor of equal importance in both streams. Furthermore, they are of increasing importance, their share of the total having risen by 7.4 percentage points within the dominant stream between 1976 and 1986, and by 8.1 percentage points within the reverse stream. These gains are equally apparent when transfers are weighed as a percentage of employment-related migration alone: their share within the dominant stream rose from 50.3 per cent to 59.7 per cent between 1976 and 1986, and from 49.8 per cent to 56.7 per cent within the reverse stream. This should not be taken to imply, however, that the occurrence of personnel transfers has soared in absolute terms. The 1976 survey recorded a total of 88,577 transfers in the dominant and reverse streams: in 1986 the total was actually 3.6 per cent lower, at 85,413. What has

actually happened is that migration for other reasons has fallen off quite sharply over time, while the volume of transfers has remained fairly steady (the total volume of the dominant and reverse streams considered together fell by 22.7 per cent over the same period).

What can we conclude from all this? Quite simply, that the dominant and reverse migration streams are connected by systematic linkages, of which by far the most important (since the 1970s at least) have been moves generated by personnel transfers. These account for more migration between metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions than any other single cause, and for the majority of the migration which can be linked to the operations of Japan's labour markets. Furthermore, personnel transfers in the dominant and reverse streams tend to cancel out, creating exchanges of population through migration which are large in absolute terms but highly inefficient (in the technical sense of the word). Transfers are organized by definition: they represent the culmination of definite and deliberate decisions on personnel management issues undertaken by the employing organizations concerned. Hence we reach the conclusion stated at the outset: that interregional migration in Japan is inefficient in large part because of the way in which a substantial proportion of it is organized.

This conclusion opens up a broad range of new questions, some of which have only been treated superficially in the theoretical and/or empirical literature on migration, whether in Japan or elsewhere, and some of which have hardly been examined at all. Yet the answers to these questions must underpin any proper understanding of how interregional migration in Japan actually works. This then is the justification for the central objective of this thesis: to identify and explain those characteristics of personnel transfers in Japan which have a bearing on the interregional migration of population.

1.4 The methodology of the thesis

Each chapter of the thesis addresses one or more aspects either of personnel transfers per se or of the linkage between transfers and migration. In methodological terms, the approach adopted is a combination of three elements.

First, there is critical selection from and commentary upon existing academic research on aspects of this subject, drawing not just from geographical studies of Japan and other countries but also from a range of relevant disciplines, including sociology, industrial relations and management science, though with a constant eye on the spatial implications of research which is often not overtly geographical in focus.

Second, there is further analysis of data already collected and published by a variety of agencies, including censuses, migration surveys and enquiries into management practices. Indeed, the majority of the tables and diagrams used have been obtained from these sources, though often with substantial reworking.

Third, there is the analysis of fresh data collected and tabulated by the author. This takes two forms. First, there is a substantial analysis of a data set on the career histories of a large number of individuals within part of the Japanese government's bureaucracy. This data set has been compiled from a number of sources, and the approach adopted is inferential in the spatial analytical tradition: a search for overt geographical patterns within the record of transfer activity. This approach has peculiar advantages, particularly in the identification of structural constraints upon mobility, and it takes advantage of the extraordinary volume and quantity of information publicly available on the career histories of individuals in Japan. For these reasons an inferential approach is a suitable point of departure for a study of this kind. It is also an approach with clear limitations, however, for as the analysis becomes more complex the role of structural variables diminishes relative to policy variables and underlying decision making structures. The work reported in this section of the thesis was undertaken outside Japan, without direct access to the organization concerned, and an opportunity has not yet arisen to move beyond this inferential stage to examine migration policies and associated personnel management practices at close quarters. These are items for a future research agenda, to be outlined in Chapter 9. Nevertheless, even this initial study of aggregated behaviour reveals clear and valuable evidence of geographical patterns within transfer activity.

Fortunately, in the second of the empirical studies we are able to move much closer to the underlying rationale for transfer activity in the specific context of a large multiregional organization. This analysis, which is based in part upon field work undertaken by the author in Japan during 1990, deals with transfers as a component of structural change within Japan's largest steelmaker, Nippon Steel, and attempts to place specific incidences of mass transfers within the broader context of personnel and industrial location decisions.

As one delves further into the transfer practices of individual organizations, the goal of generalization beyond the specific case inevitably becomes much harder to achieve. This problem can be overcome to some extent in four ways. First, one can focus on the outcome of a mass of decisions as they affect individuals, and ignore the organizations within which they are employed entirely. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 are of this type, and as we shall see, it is possible to draw some rather broad generalizations from data of this kind. Second, one can treat organizations as such as units of observation, and attempt to construct generalizations on the basis of, for example, the incidence of personnel

transfers as a function of firm size. Most of the information available on policy has been published at this scale. Third, one can select case studies which represent "typical" organizations along a range of criteria - as, for example, with the government bureaucracy to be discussed later on, which shares a number of structural features with many other organizations in both the public and the private sectors. And fourth, one can choose case studies which contain sufficient internal diversity for each component of a particular organization to be treated as a discrete entity operating under a uniform set of management practices. This last approach allows for a degree of control over policy variables that is not possible with the other alternatives. It is used in analysing part of the bureaucracy data set, and so far as the author is aware it is a method which has not been used elsewhere.

1.5 The structure of the thesis

We begin the task of analysing the Japanese case by laying down theoretical and terminological guidelines. In Chapter 2, we find that the distinction between internal and external labour markets, so easy to make in theory and so essential to the definition of personnel transfers, proves far harder to implement in practice, given the level of integration within Japan's informal business groupings (the *keiretsu*). It is shown that personnel transfers pose a significant challenge to the migration theorist, since the responsibility for the migration decision is not confined to the migrant himself, but lies partially or even exclusively with the organization that employs him. This sits poorly with well-established theories based on wage levels and investment in human capital, both of which appear to assume that migrants are autonomous decision-makers. Personnel transfers are found to be the product of interdependent decisions, and the range of possible destinations is constrained by the geographical configuration of the employing organization itself: hence the need to identify and classify the organizational structures within which transfers take place as well as the management policies which regulate them. Above all, the attenuating effect of distance, so critical to the geography of most forms of migration, is found to be a trivial constraint in the case of personnel transfers within internal labour markets.

This leads to the broader question of why employers might opt to rely upon internal labour markets to fill vacant posts, and the functions which personnel transfers are thereby expected to perform. These issues are treated first at a purely theoretical level, then in the context of Japan's distinctive "lifetime employment system". The variables of time and organizational space are used to structure a simple typology of personnel transfers within large Japanese organizations, and finally the typical pattern of geographical and organizational mobility in the careers of senior Japanese white-collar

workers is described, and is found to be similar in many respects to the careers of managerial personnel in Europe and North America.

In Chapter 3, we turn to the empirical evidence available in published survey reports on the distinguishing characteristics of Japan's transferee migrants. As compared with other migrant groups, transferees emerge as older, better educated, more likely to have a family, and more likely to work as managers, administrators or professionals in fields such as government service, finance and insurance: all findings which conform well to theoretical expectations. It is clear that the overwhelming importance of transfers within Japanese interregional migration streams is not due to the absolute number of people who fit this profile: they are a small minority of the workforce. Rather, it is the frequency with which each individual is moved around that counts.

We then examine the relationship between the transferee and the organization which employs him - and it is usually a him, for despite significant progress in some sectors, it is still only a tiny fraction of Japanese women who achieve the sort of career status that would render them liable to be transferred. In only half of all transfers do transferees claim to have had much say in any aspect of the move; the other half simply respond to the dictates of their superiors. The strength of central direction increases markedly with firm size: employees in large firms are not only less likely to be consulted about being moved, but receive less warning of an impending move as well. This serves to emphasize the importance of interpreting transfers in the context of the specific personnel management practices adopted by large organizations.

Although there is little that the employee, and especially the senior manager (who lacks union protection), can do to prevent himself from being moved around from place to place - the right of the employer to act autonomously in this matter is usually enshrined in the contract of employment - it can still act as a focus for resentment. Transfers are shown to become progressively less popular as employees get older, with the single greatest source of dissatisfaction being the disruption that is caused to their children's education by any move.

Chapter 4 is also based upon published and aggregate sources, but here the approach is at a much higher level of abstraction: a search for regularities in the patterns of transfer activity in time and space. We begin with secular changes, and find further confirmation that personnel transfers have increased in importance relative to other forms of migration over the past twenty years, although the absolute growth in the numbers of transferees has generally been marginal. Secular growth is masked by sharp fluctuations from year to year, which appear to be correlated with economic cycles through complex mechanisms, the full elaboration of which lies well beyond the scope of this thesis. The need to

redeploy labour during recessions is an important incentive for transfers (especially permanent transfers and outplacements) amongst blue-collar workers, and there are already signs that transfers of this type have been stimulated by the current recession in Japan (Desmond, 1992), but transfers represent only one of many ways in which companies can adjust to adverse circumstances, and are sometimes a last resort. Other temporal characteristics of transfer activity explored in this chapter are seasonal rhythms (which prove to be very marked) and the average duration of individual postings.

In the second half of the chapter we move closer to the heart of this thesis, as attention is switched to spatial patterns. There is only a limited and imperfect supply of data published at an aggregate level with which to explore geographical questions, and the analysis is therefore both fragmentary and intricate. It is overwhelmingly clear, however, that migration generated by personnel transfers does have a distinctive geography of its own, in which the dominant element is the relationship with settlement size: the larger the settlements at origin and destination, the greater the absolute and relative importance of transfer activity. Conversely, flows between very large and very small places are limited, due to the presence of spatially nested internal labour markets at prefectural, regional, national and international scales. Beyond the effects of scale, distance appears to have little autonomous effect upon the volume of transfer flows: rather, it is the location of the boundaries between different labour markets that counts. Although the largest absolute flows of transferee migrants are between Japan's metropolitan regions, transfers actually account for a much higher proportion of employment-related migration in and out of rural and peripheral prefectures, largely because these are rarely the destinations of choice for new entrants to the work force.

In the two chapters which follow, detailed case studies are presented that probe deeper into the mechanisms which generate the geographical structure of personnel transfers. The case studies, of the Ministry of Labour in Chapter 5 and the Nippon Steel Corporation in Chapter 6, are designed to illustrate the characteristics of personnel transfers under two contrasting circumstances: of stability and routine in the first case, and profound organizational change in the second.

The senior bureaucrats who form the subject of Chapter 5 experience careers which follow well defined paths through space and time. Interregional transfers take place at regular points in each career, with origins and destinations constrained not only by the spatial distribution of the Ministry's many branches and affiliates, but also by hierarchical relationships between places which are strongly linked to population and settlement size. A "ratchet effect" ensures that individuals who are rotated from one branch to another without an associated gain in rank always move upwards in this settlement hierarchy, until vertical promotion to a higher rank allows the ratchet to slip. The Ministry's internal

labour market is sharply segmented between "career" and "non-career" bureaucrats, a segmentation which finds clear geographical expression in the distinction between transfer systems operating among Japan's larger cities and prefectural capitals and systems confined within the boundaries of single prefectures. The spatial structures of simultaneous and sequential transfers conform to "stellar" or "circuit" patterns, depending in large measure upon the relative abundance of posts in the headquarters building relative to posts in local branches. While the career paths of each individual may be unique, the picture that emerges when career segments are aggregated is almost mechanistic in its simplicity and adherence to simple spatial and hierarchical rules.

In methodological terms, Chapter 5 relies upon inference from the observed pattern of transfer activity, an approach made possible by the regular publication of staff postings lists, from which the author has been able to compile an unusually large data base. While this material proves a rich medium in which to employ the techniques of spatial analysis, the results are essentially ahistorical. This may be appropriate in an organization that is stable, but it is quite inappropriate in the face of the radical structural changes described in the second case study. In Chapter 6 we examine the evidence of personnel transfers within the Nippon Steel Corporation (Japan's largest steelmaker), with particular reference to the Kamaishi Steelworks. In the 1960s the steel industry was a growth sector, and new facilities were being established at various sites throughout Japan, creating new posts that were often filled by workers from existing plants, such as that at Kamaishi, through permanent transfers. By the late 1970s, however, the industry was deep in the throws of structural recession, and Nippon Steel embarked on a series of recovery plans, each of which required transfers of labour either to other steelworks or to subsidiaries. These transfers are examined in detail, in the light of the alternative forms of employment adjustment that were open to the company at each stage in its recovery. The results illustrate not only the importance of the geographical configuration of the company itself as a constraint on migration patterns, but also the fluidity of the boundary between "internal" and "external" labour markets in an economy bound together by complex hierarchical linkages between firms.

In Chapters 5 and 6, the focus is upon changes in the place of employment, with the link to residential mobility left implicit. In the two chapters that follow, we explore two aspects of the transformation of internal labour market activity into migration proper. In Chapter 7 we examine the question of how the accommodation needs of transferees are met, and in doing so discover strong linkages between internal labour markets and what may be called "internal housing markets" within the company housing sector. Company housing (or "issued housing") represents only a small and declining proportion of Japan's housing stock, but the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that it is involved in a very high proportion of residential migrations between prefectures,

particularly where transfers are the cause. The origins of the involvement of large Japanese companies in the provision of housing are examined, together with the rationale for continuing the practice. Other forms of housing assistance available to transferees are also described.

For employers to make housing available to transferees is one thing; for employees to accept the offer is quite another. In Chapter 8 we examine another distinguishing characteristic of the Japanese case: the high proportion of transferees who opt to leave their families behind for the duration of a posting and adopt the life of a temporary "business bachelor" instead. This "partial migration" of transferees represents a compromise between full residential migration on the one hand and long-distance commuting on the other, and serves to depress the overall impact of personnel transfers on population migration streams. The incidence of *tanshin funin* is discussed, together with the policy measures adopted by employers to cope with it. The likelihood of an employee opting for this solution is seen to be a function of his family situation, but it is also clear that the very regularity of transfers, particularly amongst white-collar employees, helps to promote the partial migration solution.

Chapters 7 and 8 raise many more questions than can be answered with the very limited data available at present, and these questions form part of the agenda for future research on the geography of personnel transfers which is set out in Chapter 9, along with the main conclusions of the thesis. A key component of the research agenda takes into account one obvious but so far unacknowledged limitation of the present study: its preoccupation with domestic migration, in an era in which Japanese personnel are increasingly exposed to transfers between far-flung corners of the globe.

1.6 Antecedents

The author has been engaged in the study of interregional migration in Japan for many years, and it would be inappropriate to end this introductory chapter without placing the empirical research reported in the thesis in the context of its published antecedents.

The initial stimulus for this research came from a paper published in 1979 (Wiltshire 1979b), which explored the relationship between personnel transfers and reverse migration - though from a very narrow empirical base. Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis can be described not so much as an extension of the original as a replacement for it, such has been the improvement in the availability of relevant data over the intervening decade.

The case study of Labour Ministry officials presented in Chapter 5 also began life as a published paper (Wiltshire 1983), but the present treatment is far larger in scale and

incorporates more details about the individuals concerned. The case study of prefectural bureaucrats, however, is closely related to a recent publication on organizational mobility (Wiltshire, 1990).

Personnel adjustments within the Nippon Steel Corporation were examined by Sargent and Wiltshire (1988). This paper led to the formation of a research project on the changing geography of the Japanese steel industry, which enjoyed financial support from the United Kingdom Japan Foundation Endowment Committee and the SOAS Research Committee, and which allowed the author to visit to Japan in April and May, 1990. Much of the detailed material presented in Chapter 6 was either collected during this visit or obtained with the assistance of the London Office of the Nippon Steel Corporation. Some of this material has been discussed in other papers generated by the research project, which include Wiltshire (1991 and 1992).

1.7 Summary of Chapter 1

In this chapter we have examined evidence that a large proportion of interregional migration in Japan results from personnel transfers, and concluded that this helps to explain why, despite substantial levels of gross mobility, net migration is so limited - that is, why interregional migration is so "inefficient". The aim in subsequent chapters, therefore, is to identify those characteristics of personnel transfers in Japan which have a bearing on interregional migration patterns, in the context both of the wider institutional framework within which transfers take place and of the experience of other countries.

In the next chapter we will examine what is known at a theoretical level about personnel transfers and their link to migration, before outlining those elements of Japanese organizations and personnel management practices which have an important bearing upon transfer activity. This discussion, together with empirical information at the national scale which is examined in Chapters 3 and 4, forms an essential background to the detailed case studies presented in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2 Personnel Transfers in Theory and Practice

2.1 Some problems of definition

In this chapter we examine the relationship between personnel transfers and other forms of mobility within the broader context of migration theory, and define the functions which transfers are expected to perform within "internal labour markets". The focus will be upon theoretical and general issues, but care will also be taken to map out linkages between theory and the Japanese case, bearing in mind the characteristics of the Japanese "lifetime employment system", which will be examined in detail in a later section. We shall also tread carefully between three separate but interconnected concepts - population migration, which is defined by a change of residence, labour migration, which is a change of residence accompanied by a change of job (Johnson and Salt, 1990, p. 1), and labour mobility, which is a change of job with or without an associated residential change. Much of what will be said here and in subsequent chapters concerns the mechanisms underlying labour mobility: the translation into full labour migration involves other factors, such as distance and the domestic circumstances of the migrant, to which we shall return in Chapter 8.

First, however, we should determine exactly what is meant by the term "personnel transfer", both in theory and in practice. It is a term which combines three elements: the employment status of an individual, the notion of mobility, and an underlying structure of decision-making. Each element is important. The specification of employment status distinguishes between those persons who are in some way attached to the employer as "personnel" and those who lie beyond the employer's immediate control. The individuals concerned are already part of an organizational structure internal to that employer, whether on a legal or a customary basis. The notion of mobility implies that there are a number of discrete posts or stations within that organizational structure between which individual employees can move, and this movement may find geographical expression as a change in the location of employment and, on occasion, of residence as well. In using the word "transfer" as opposed simply to movement, we imply a decision-making process in which the individual concerned plays just one and possibly a minor role: it may be with his or her consent, but ultimately the transferee moves because the transferee is sent.

The personnel transfer is a form of labour mobility that is specific to the "internal labour market" of an employer, the structure of which was first examined at length by Doeringer and Piore (1971). In choosing to operate an internal labour market, an employing organization seeks to take advantage of its existing staff by redeploying them,

in preference to the alternatives, which are to engage the services of other, currently unattached individuals drawn from the open "external" market, or to poach staff from elsewhere. There is an element of choice: as we shall see, the existence of a large employing organization is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the development of an internal labour market. There is also a problem of definition here though, not of the internal labour market so much as of the employing organization within which that market is said to operate, by definition, and whose boundaries also demark the internal from the external.

It would be convenient if all such organizations had discrete boundaries formally defined and inviolable in practice. An employing organization is a system, however, and all human systems are open. The degree of openness depends in part upon the type of flows being measured - whether of money, of information, of authority, of goods, or of personnel. And there is an important hierarchical dimension. Organizations can be nested within each other, as for example with a government ministry and its constituent bureaux, departments and sections, and an organization that by one criterion may be discrete (eg. by company law) may in practice be nested, however loosely, within broader systems defined by interlocking directorships, share ownership, or even dependency based on supplier-customer relationships. Herein lies a danger of circularity, for if the flow of personnel within the organization is used to define the organization's boundaries, in whole or in part, then personnel transfers (by definition within an organization) cannot ultimately be defined other than by reference to themselves. To avoid the danger, we must take care to define organizations using other criteria.

A brief excursion into the Japanese case will demonstrate that the question of organizational definition is more than a semantic quibble. Reference has already been made to the *keiretsu*, the informal business groupings which tie many Japanese companies together, normally on the basis of minority shareholdings, market dependence or vertical linkages. The typical *keiretsu* consists of at least one major industrial concern (together with associated banking and finance operations), whose workers enjoy a privileged position within the Japanese labour force, surrounding which are to be found numerous affiliates, subsidiaries and sub-contractors, many with their own dependent companies in turn, which supply the core enterprise with goods or services and offer inferior conditions to their own workers, as part of the so-called "dual structure" of Japanese industry. When a major manufacturer seeks to improve the quality of the components which it obtains from a supplier, it is common practice to transfer a member of its own staff temporarily to the supplier to assist in the improvement of the latter's performance (Dore, 1985, p. 82). Given the probability of minority shareholding in the supplier, an argument could reasonably be made, independent of labour market considerations, that this is in effect a personnel transfer within an extended and loosely

defined "internal labour market" within which both companies operate. Nagano (1989) argues that such linkages define "intermediate organizations" which straddle the conventional boundary between internal and external labour markets, undermining the neat simplicity of that dualism.

Now consider a much harder case. Over the past few years Japan's large steelmakers have been shedding labour as rapidly as possible, by encouraging smaller firms in other sectors to take on its surplus older workers. Mostly these other firms are conventional suppliers or customers, and thus independently definable as part of an "intermediate organization", but often the relationship between the two firms is quite nebulous, and in one documented case the recipient was a local *sushi* bar that steelworkers happened to frequent (Aoki, 1987, pp. 18-21), which is hardly a substantial basis for defining an organizational linkage. Under circumstances like these, linkages develop between companies solely for the purpose of resolving difficulties over staffing levels. Nevertheless, once one firm has been "colonized" by staff from another firm, on whatever grounds, the basis exists for further movements through subsequent bilateral agreement, whether or not there are other forms of linkage between them. From this point it becomes difficult to define the internal labour market other than with reference to transfer activity, and circularity emerges.

To summarize, the definition of an employing organization may present some difficulties, and there will be a grey area in which it is unclear whether a particular movement is effectively an internal transfer or just the assisted passage of an individual into the external labour market. In such cases, care must be taken to examine both the formal organizational relationship between origin and destination and the actual structure of decision-making which governs the move.

There is also another problem of definition that requires attention. If personnel transfers are a form of mobility, and mobility implies that there are discrete posts or stations between which individual employees can move, then it should be possible to define those posts or stations independently of the transfer itself, as discrete "jobs" which individual employees must perform. At this point the level of detail at which job descriptions are formulated, if at all, needs to be examined, as does the relationship (if any) between the formal title an individual employee bears and the actual tasks performed. In addition, while some jobs are clearly tenable only by one individual at a time, others may be held by several individuals, and one individual may hold several jobs simultaneously. All of these are practical difficulties which must be confronted in any cultural context, but they are compounded in the Japanese case by the fact that the individual Japanese employee tends to relate to his "job" or "occupation" in a way not

normally found in most other economically developed countries (Suzuki, 1981, p. 32; Dore, 1985, p. 92).

Consider the evidence presented by Robert Cole in his book Work, Mobility and Participation (1979). Cole examined the generally held view that in Japan, and especially at higher managerial levels, there is a high ratio of intra-firm to inter-firm mobility (i.e., that internal labour markets predominate). He found that inter-firm mobility in Yokohama was about half of that in his Detroit sample, which was to be expected, but that contrary to the popular view, intra-firm mobility was about the same in the two cities. This peculiar result was attributed by Cole to undercounting of intra-firm moves in his Japanese sample, because of what he described as the low level of occupational and job consciousness (in the narrow sense) in Japan. In his own words:

"... the relative lack of sharp jurisdictional definitions of job duties on the part of both management and workers tends to make Japanese workers less conscious of job changes. This is not simply a matter of under reporting, but rather that the very concept of job and job change seems to differ in the two societies...." This suggests "...that internal labour markets may have quite different bases in different nations ... the large Japanese firm is characterized by strong internal labor markets, but the criteria for distinguishing rights and obligations are not those of explicit job classifications with standard wage rates." (Cole, *ibid.*, pp. 99-101)

Despite this low level of job consciousness in Japan, however, managers and workers are endowed with formal titles and ranks which seem to describe the job performed. Herein lies the opposite danger in dealing with Japanese data. It is quite possible for an employee to undergo a "formal" increase in status, through the acquisition of a new title or rank, without there actually being any material change in the tasks he performs. "Promotions" of this type are increasingly prevalent in mature organizations with ageing workforces, where the management pyramid ensures that there are plenty of middle managers who stand no real chance of further promotion; the award of a new, and essentially fictitious rank under such circumstances is at least one way of saving the disappointed employee's face, at zero cost, and sustaining the myth of a pecking order based upon age and a smooth vertical career escalator. Indeed, large organizations may sometimes create new sections specifically to have somewhere to put employees suffering from career blight. The implication of the proliferation of sham titles is that "transfers" recorded in public data sources may well overstate the real underlying level of mobility between "jobs", defining "jobs" in the western sense.

In short, it is quite possible in dealing with Japanese internal labour markets that some forms of transfer will be under-reported because the posts concerned are ill-defined, while other forms will be overstated because they are illusory. This has implications not only for the interpretation of statistics on transfer activity, which

obviously must be treated with caution, but also in a wider sense, in comparing the Japanese case with others in the context of labour market or migration theory, when the underlying concepts of post, job, or occupation lack consistency of meaning across all places.

A final definitional problem surrounds the use of the term "internal labour market" in the Japanese context at all. Dore et. al. (1989, p. 11) distinguish between internal labour markets and internal redeployment (i.e. personnel transfers) as fundamentally different models of long-term employment adjustment, the main distinction being that whereas the former includes elements of competition for advertised vacancies, internal redeployment is essentially an administrative mechanism, particularly as it effects managerial staff. Regarding Japanese practices, they do not mince words:

"Let us drive the point home. The distinction we are primarily drawing is between market and administration rather than the conventional and sometimes misleading one between internal and external labour markets". (ibid., p. 12)

They are not the first to query whether the concept of the internal labour market is appropriate to Japan (see, for example, Ono, 1973, p. 13), yet it is widely used by others well familiar with the Japanese scene, such as Koike, and in connection with both blue-collar and white-collar staff. Koike's justification rests upon the fact that the formal administrative directives which instigate transfers are underpinned by a rigorous system of competition, multiple evaluation and selection, particularly once the years of initial training are over, which effectively sets a standard evaluation upon each individual that is similar to a market price (Koike, 1988, p. 222). Indeed, fierce competition is inevitable, whatever the outward signs of harmony, because the number of posts diminishes rapidly at higher levels in the managerial hierarchy. While it is literally true, therefore, that there is no market mechanism at work, the outcome is much the same, and the underlying reasons for implementing transfers are identical (for which see Section 2.3 below).

2.2 Personnel transfers and migration theory

Personnel transfers may represent a distinctive form of labour mobility, but when it comes to understanding why labour migration takes place, interpreting the patterns of migration in time and space, and assessing the impact of personnel transfers upon the communities in which these people live, does the distinction between transfers and other forms of mobility actually matter? The answer is undoubtedly yes, because traditional theories of migration (of labour or population in general), whether based upon neoclassical economics, human capital theory or behavioural approaches, rely upon assumptions about decision-making structures which are clearly violated wherever internal labour markets operate. In this section we will explore five main areas in which such difficulties exist, drawing in particular upon the seminal papers by McKay and

Whitelaw (1977 and 1981) as well as subsequent treatments by Johnson and Salt (1980 and 1990) and others, and illustrating the discussion where appropriate by reference to Japanese examples.

Briefly stated, the main areas of difficulty involve five widespread assumptions regarding migration, which are:

- (1) "that the decision to move and the choice of destination are made freely by the individual" (McKay and Whitelaw, 1977, p. 28);
- (2) that migration decisions are independent of each other;
- (3) that "choices can be made between a wide range of alternatives" (ibid., p. 28);
- (4) that one option for the individual is to stay put; and
- (5) that geographical distance is an impediment to movement.

We shall now examine each of these assumptions in turn.

2.2.1 Who decides?

One common feature of most existing "theories" of migration is that the ultimate decision on whether or not to migrate is taken by the individual (or individuals) involved. In the work of neo-classical economists such as Greenwood (1975), Cebula (1979) and others, for whom migration (or more specifically, labour migration) is a rational response to interregional differentials in income opportunities, individuals migrate until the point is reached where wages are equalized and a new equilibrium is restored. The migration process can therefore be modelled by a regression equation, in which income (or wage) differentials are the key independent variable, and other independent variables (cost of living, mean temperature etc.) are added to discount its effect in various ways. The assumption is that each individual does a calculation like this for his or her self, and reacts accordingly. In effect, migration theory is reduced to an extension of wages theory.

Two well-known variants lead on from this. One is the so-called Todaro model (Todaro, 1969), in which the income opportunities are weighted by the prevailing employment rate, while the other is the human capital model of Becker, as adapted to the labour migration case by Sjaastad (1962), Bowles (1970) and others, in which the future income stream after migration is discounted to the present and compared with the equivalent income that would have accrued in the absence of migration. Once again, actual decision-making is the responsibility of the individual migrant acting on his or her own interpretation of present and future opportunities in free and open labour markets.

In the case of a personnel transfer, however, while the individual who is to change jobs must ultimately give his or her consent to the idea (freely or otherwise), both the actual decision-making process and such matters as the timing, duration and destination of the transfer may lie entirely under the control of others, and will be determined by the priorities and requirements of the employing organization, which may or may not correspond with those of the individual employee. It could be argued that a decision to accept such an order implies that the employee's own personal interests (which would prevail under conventional assumptions about labour migration) must correlate with those of the employer to some extent, and the transferee may have some right, either by custom or in law, to influence the particulars of the transfer order. In such cases, of course, the underlying decision-making structure becomes more complex, but the key point remains valid, that the dominant actor in the process is not the migrant himself, but the organization to which he belongs and which controls the distribution of work. The general assumption that it is the migrant alone who decides is clearly violated. Of course, the transferee may still be free to determine his or her new residential arrangements, and thus retain some role in the migration process, although as we shall see in Chapter 7, in the Japanese case even accommodation decisions may lie firmly within the employer's domain.

The implication of all this is that the study of labour migration consequent upon mobility within internal labour markets must be based upon an understanding of the requirements and decision-making methods of the employing organization and the constraints within which its decisions are made, rather than upon the priorities of the individual employee: in effect, the emphasis should be on the personnel department, rather than the personnel. This is an important shift in focus, because employment policy is itself just one element in an organization's strategic equation, and is subject to modification for any number of reasons, which may in turn have a far greater impact on mobility patterns than the motivations of the individuals concerned.

2.2.2 Interdependent decisions

A second common assumption in theoretical approaches to migration in general, and labour migration in particular, is that migration decisions are formulated independently of each other, and hence that each act of migration can be viewed as a discrete event. An exception is return migration, which should be examined in the context of the original decision to leave, but even then the focus remains firmly on the individual migrant.

In the case of personnel transfers, however, it would be misleading to examine each transfer on a case-by-case basis, when the employer's requirement is for a smooth and efficient reallocation of labour which minimizes internal disruption, and which may

therefore necessitate a degree of coordination. Any migration decisions that follow, therefore, will be partially interdependent with each other.

In any employing organization within which there are specific jobs that have to be done, and particular positions that have to be filled, transfers will tend to occur not in temporal and spatial isolation but in chains, chains in which individual employees move (or rather, are moved) in a sequential manner to fill positions vacated by those located elsewhere in the corporate hierarchy. Under these circumstances no single transfer can be fully explained in isolation from the rationale which underlies the entire chain.

The structure of personnel transfer chains within organizations and traversing the boundary into the external labour market beyond was investigated in depth by H.C. White in his seminal book Chains of Opportunity (1970). White identified four types of system linking employees to jobs. First, there are *tight systems*, in which employees move with little or no interval from one incumbency to the next, whereas some time is required to fill each vacancy. Second, there are *loose systems*, in which vacancies are usually filled at once, but individual employees spend some time floating in a limbo status between successive jobs. Third, there are *coordinated systems*, in which vacancies and limbos are both negligible in length. And fourth, there are *matchmaking systems*, in which limbos and vacancies are comparable and substantial in length.

The relative importance of these four types is likely to vary through time in any one organization, and over space between organizations and especially between economic cultures with different labour market institutions. If we look in more detail at the Japanese case, we find a strong tendency for personnel transfer systems to be of White's coordinated type, with few vacancies and few individuals remaining in limbo for extended periods. Indeed, employees tend to be moved in what appear on the surface at least to be elaborate *simultaneous chains* in which several posts are exchanged at the same time. In Chapter 4 we will see that these exchanges also follow a distinct temporal rhythm: a high proportion take place on just a few days in any year, and especially around April 1, the date which marks the beginning of the new school year, the date of induction for new employees, and for many economic institutions the commencement of the new financial year as well (Inagami, 1984, p. 7; Suzuki, 1981, Chapter 3; Skinner, 1983, p. 63). This process is even visible on the ground each spring: railway stations are clogged by parties of businessmen, bureaucrats and others gathered together to bid ceremonial farewell to erstwhile colleagues on their way to new postings.

Although the main focus in White's work is upon the *vacancy chains* which occur in tight job systems, rippling backwards through the organization as each post is filled, for coordinated systems a different emphasis is appropriate, with the focus not upon

vacancies but upon the types of personnel policies being pursued and the mechanisms through which these policies are operationalized.

As for the spatial implications of interlinked job vacancies, these were first noted by Torsten Hägerstrand, who observed that in geographical terms much of the associated migration will be expressed as reciprocal replacements, and will thus contribute to the imbalance between gross and net migration to which reference was made in Chapter 1:

"I am convinced that the majority of movements are replacement movements. They arise to fill vacancies, which in the final cases are due to deaths or superannuation. Depending upon the demands in regard to training and age imposed upon those who will fill the vacancy, there come into being long or short *movement chains*. These of course affect the volume of not only the functional mobility, but also the geographical. The dominance of replacement moves surely also explains why the large number of gross migrations registered is in fact accompanied by relatively small net profits and losses". (Hägerstrand, 1969, p. 71)

There is, however, another type of chain which complicates research into personnel transfers, and which operates independently of White's four systems. This is the chain which snakes through time and space, tracing the path followed by each individual's *career*.

From the standpoint of the individual employee, a career consists of a number of discrete movements through a vertically structured organizational space, (or spaces, if recourse is made to the external labour market), movements which may or may not require a simultaneous horizontal shift of the place of work (and perhaps an associated change of residence) in geographical space. Each individual employee will follow his or her own *career path*, and will at times reach critical points at which the propensity to move horizontally is at a maximum (Salt, 1986, pp. 180-181). All moves are interdependent: the decision to accept a particular transfer may seem irrational in the short term, if the employee concerned is disadvantaged or appears to reap no gain, yet may make perfect sense if the employee perceives it as a stepping stone on the way to later advancement.

We will examine the main characteristics of a typical Japanese organizational career in Section 2.6. The point to be made here, however, is that the student of mobility in internal labour markets must have regard not only for latitudinal chaining between employees at any one time, as determined by the immediate needs of the employing organization, but also for the chains which thread through each individual's working life, necessitating recourse to some form of longitudinal analysis. To make matters worse, these two forms of chaining are themselves interdependent, for each round of staff reshuffling creates opportunities for career enhancement, while over the longer term the

career interests of the employee intersect with the employer's own concern for staff development and the replacement of senior personnel lost through retirement. Sometimes it may be impossible to harmonize the interests of the employer and employee in both the short and long term simultaneously (Dore et. al., 1989, p. 12), with contradictions emerging instead, such that the career of any one individual may read as a complex story of seemingly ill-connected events which trace the working out of this contradiction over time and space.

2.2.3 Limited destinations

A third common assumption in theories of migration is that individuals make free choices from a wide range of alternative destinations. In the real world, of course, there are important constraints upon the choice of destinations for all forms of migration, and especially for labour migration: from work permit requirements at international frontiers to simple ignorance about vacancies elsewhere. Barriers such as these may actually be less of a constraint for the transferee than for the "free" migrant in the external labour market, for major companies can assist with immigration paperwork and ensure the efficient circulation of information about new jobs. Counteracting such advantages, however, is the overriding constraint on movement imposed by the geographical limits of the employing organization's operations. Even if the individual employee enjoys some freedom of choice regarding destinations within the organization, he is still constrained in that choice by the spatial and vertical structures of the organization concerned.

It follows, therefore, that the spatial and vertical structures of the organization must be analysed and understood before the patterns of migration within the organization can be adequately tackled. And even that may not be enough, if the organization itself regards certain of its activities as being particularly appropriate for staffing by transients, while other areas are best left alone. The idea that some posts may be used explicitly as "gate-openers", to test the abilities of candidates for higher positions, implies both a faster turnover of staff and a systematic bias in transfers in favour of such posts (McKay and Whitelaw, 1981, p. 97)

The danger here, of course, is that research on personnel transfers may degenerate into a series of case studies between which no comparisons can be made and no generalizations spun out, because each organization is treated in isolation and from an idiographic perspective (Flowerdew, 1982, pp. 222-223). This problem has plagued the geography of enterprise from its inception, and the solution must be to establish suitable categories of organizations which share similar characteristics regarding the treatment of personnel transfers, or which at least exert similar constraints upon internal mobility.

In answer to this problem, McKay and Whitelaw (1981, pp. 104-105) identified four basic types of spatial organizational structure: scale and contact dependent organizations, resource dependent organizations, urban hierarchy dependent organizations, and market dependent organizations.

Scale and contact dependent organizations tend to occupy a narrow range of locations clustered either in major urban areas or in proximity to functionally related firms, while the spatial configuration of resource dependent organizations naturally reflects the geographical distribution of the resource concerned. These are common organizational forms in the manufacturing sector, and since operations are confined to a few sites and most white-collar employees perform specialist roles, the opportunities for interregional migration are limited.

On the other hand, urban hierarchy dependent organizations and (to an even greater extent) market dependent organizations depend upon close contact with the public at large, and exhibit a spatial structure which closely mirrors the underlying distribution of population. These are the typical organizational forms of the service sector, and are sometimes found in combination, with the market dependent form common at the retailing or customer service end (e.g. in retail banks, supermarket chains and employment exchanges), and the urban hierarchy form dominating for higher level administration and wholesaling functions and specialized services. Given the larger number of operating sites and their geographical spread, it can be expected that mobility levels will be higher in these two types of organization, and that such mobility will have a strong geographical expression.

Simple typologies like this can be useful in the search for generalizations about personnel transfers, but they can also be misleading, in as much as they imply clear boundaries between, and homogeneity within, a specific type. Even among market dependent organizations there is scope for considerable variation, both in the number and location of markets a particular organization may choose to enter, and in the level at which those markets are defined. For example, two local offices serving small market areas can always be combined by administrative fiat to form a regional office serving a larger area, and enjoying much higher status within the organization than either of its predecessors (Wiltshire, 1990, p. 39). Similarly, mobility levels are likely to be much higher in an organization which has adopted a "unitary" pattern of administrative control, in which strong coordination and control from the centre are required, than in a "polycentric" organization which permits a high degree of local or divisional autonomy (Pred, 1975), even though the geographical configuration of both organizations may be the same.

It may be more helpful, therefore, to think in terms of a continuum in the level of sustainable diversity in organizational structures, a continuum marked at one extreme by dynamic private manufacturing concerns in footloose industries, free to manage their affairs as they see fit, and at the other by government bureaucracies tied firmly by law or convention to the operation of a particular vertical structure and by the obligation to extend a service to all parts of the country. At the former extreme, detailed mobility policies are the key to understanding transfer patterns, but the prospects for constructing generalizations with wide applicability are limited by the diversity of policies and organizational structures. At the latter extreme, personnel transfers are likely to be mechanistic and systematized, of the "simultaneous chain" variety, and largely explicable in terms of a narrow range of common organizational forms, which in turn opens up much greater possibilities for the construction of general models and theories. The case study to be presented in Chapter 5 clearly lies at the mechanistic end of this spectrum.

2.2.4 No standing still

A fourth common assumption in labour migration studies and migration studies in general is that one alternative available to the individual is to stay in the same place. Much hinges upon the interpretation of "place", for although a transfer must take an individual to a new job, that job may be located in the same city, in the same building, even in the same office or factory as the present one. Hence, while mobility between jobs must certainly occur, there may be no other effects upon the spatial behaviour of the individual concerned, including his or her residential location. Besides, if the new and old jobs are separated by a substantial distance, it is still open to the employee to select his own preference between commuting, complete residential migration, or as we shall see in Chapter 8, some compromise between the two.

In the narrower sense of mobility between specific, narrowly defined posts in an organization, it is much harder to argue that the employee always has the choice not to move, partly because the decision-making power lies elsewhere, but also because to refuse a move may cause disruption not only to the individual's own career, but also to other employees caught up in a transfer chain (Skinner, 1983, p. 64). An analogy may be drawn with a house buyer who has exchanged contracts on his existing home; having done so he will have to move (or face the bailiffs), even if the new house no longer appeals.

Faced with a transfer order that is difficult to accept, the employee's scope for action will be determined by legal obligations, by whatever agreements may exist between the employing organization, the employee or the employees representatives (including a trade union), and by the attitude of the employer. For example, the employee may have the

right to refuse a transfer on social or medical grounds, or the employer may operate a scheme in which the transferee is given the option of remaining in the same locality (if not in the same specific job), but at the cost of slower advancement in his or her subsequent career.

In effect, there is a central trade-off in migration related to personnel transfers, between the spatial stability of the individual employee on the one hand, and his organizational stability on the other. As long as the individual hopes to maintain (or enhance) his status within the organization, he will be forced to pack his bags and move on to a new town, city, even country, whenever the organization demands it. For the employee well rooted in a particular locality, however, that rootedness can only be maintained within the organization by sacrificing career goals. Where the compromise will be struck in the case of any particular individual will depend upon the evolving interplay between his own desires and the opportunities afforded to him.

2.2.5 Distance as a trivial constraint

The fifth common assumption of migration studies, that distance itself is an impediment to movement, has probably attracted more attention in the geographical literature than any other aspect of human migration. Distance is assumed to have a frictional effect upon migration for a number of reasons: the real cost of travel and of transporting personal effects is assumed to be a function of it, information about alternative opportunities is assumed to decline in quality with it, and migrants are expected to show a preference, *ceteris paribus*, for an opportunity located in close proximity to one at a greater distance, if only to minimize residential, social and other forms of disruption. These costs also arise with residential moves caused by personnel transfers, but they may not be born by the transferee alone: many employers offer a package of benefits and assistance to persons who have been required to move to compensate them for the cost (McKay and Whitelaw, 1981, p. 101). A typical package may include the cost of travel to the new location for the transferee and his family, assistance with the cost of removals, help in locating a new home, the assumption of responsibility by the employer for the sale of the old home, compensation for general disturbance, and so on. In addition, internal transferees will have access to much better information about alternative destinations than is typical of "free" migrants in external labour markets (Johnson and Salt, 1980, p. 278). The effect of this will be to reduce the friction of distance substantially from the transferee's point of view, and coincidentally increase the relative importance of other constraints on mobility which are unrelated to distance.

Of course, shifting the burden of distance onto the employing organization does not destroy that burden, but the sums involved may well seem insignificant in comparison

with the organization's overall costs or with the benefits that the employer may receive as a consequence of the move. As a result, the frictional effect of distance may be reduced or even removed entirely from the decision-making process which underlies transfer activities. The employing organization is also much better placed than the individual transferee to reduce the actual cost of movement. For example, it may be possible to reduce the cost of housing provision at the destination of the transfer by drawing upon the employer's own housing stock - an unusual circumstance in Europe or North America, but as we shall see in Chapter 7, a very common one in Japan, where major employers still retain large amounts of "company housing" on their books.

Distance itself can be variously defined. In some instances it is appropriate to treat it as a continuous variable, but with personnel transfers the relevant context is not conventional geographical space *per se*, but rather the space defined by the geographical structure of the organization concerned, which may well be discontinuous, irregular, and hierarchically organized according to principles unique to that organization. Each hierarchical level may in turn offer a different range of opportunities to the potential transferee, much as the range of services on offer increases as one scales the urban hierarchy. In market dependent organizations the analogy with the urban hierarchy may be particularly appropriate, since there is likely to be a close (but by no means perfect) correlation between the internal structure of the organization and the urban hierarchy itself. By definition, the relationship will be even stronger for urban hierarchy dependent organizations, but it may also be true even of scale/contact or resource dependent organizations, if they are internally differentiated to the point where operational and administrative sections can be geographically divorced, with the latter adopting an urban-based structure, particularly at the higher management end. One consequence of this hierarchical structuring is the dominant role performed by the location of the organization's head office, which can perform a "switching point" function in transfer systems as the origin or destination of the vast majority of moves (McKay and Whitelaw, 1981, p. 110). A related possibility is that transfers between branches will take the form of "a series of moves from the smallest centres gradually ascending both the urban and the corporate hierarchy" (Flowerdew, 1982, p. 217).

2.2.6 Summary

To summarize, we have found in this section that personnel transfers are different from other forms of labour mobility, partly because the decision-making processes at work are at least partially beyond the individual's control, and that as a result, migration associated with personnel transfers does not conform with the conventional assumptions of migration theory. In addition, the structure of the organization concerned imposes strict

limits on the geography of internal movement, while distance itself may play only a minor and discontinuous role.

What the discussion has not told us, however, is why it is that organizations actually choose to operate the internal labour markets which give rise to personnel transfers. In part this is an excusable omission, in that our purpose is not to understand management strategies in their entirety but simply to interpret the geographical consequences of particular tactical decisions. In practice, however, the way in which transfers are implemented, and the spatial manifestations of transfer activity, are very much conditioned by the organization's own definition of its internal labour market and by the range of personnel management problems for which internal solutions are preferred.

It is also self-evident that one cannot have personnel transfers and associated interregional migration without also having large multiregional organizations within which those transfers can take place. It is a useful observation though, in that it suggests that a primary distinction can be made between transfers which may arise in the normal course of an organization's operations, and transfers stimulated by the growth, expansion or retraction of an organization - that is, by structural change. The distinction has been important in the selection of case study materials for this thesis: by and large, the picture presented of the Labour Ministry in Chapter 5 is one of structural stability and of transfer activity as a normal and routine event, while the redistribution of steel workers discussed in Chapter 6 traces important changes in the internal geography of that industry.

But although the existence of multiregional organizations is a necessary condition for personnel transfers to take place, it is not a sufficient condition: there must also be incentives for organizations to adopt internal labour market solutions. In the next section, therefore, we will examine the reasons why some organizations choose to rely upon internal labour markets, taking due account of the individual employee, without whose acquiescence such markets cannot work.

2.3 The functions of internal labour markets

Internal labour markets can be viewed simply as an alternative means through which employing organizations are able to fill their labour requirements. Although such markets are narrower than their external equivalents, and the primary responsibility for decision-making is shifted onto the employer, nevertheless the effect is much the same: labour is redistributed and reallocated. But why is it that employers choose to transfer staff from one place to another, rather than simply hire locally for every vacancy, and fire locally whenever times turn hard?

Part of the answer lies with the type of work which is to be performed, and hence the type of worker who must be dealt with (White, 1970, pp. 17-18). The external labour market is normally segmented according to skills, experience, qualifications, age and other criteria, and particular segments differ in their spatial configuration and extent. In deciding whether to draw upon a particular segment of the external labour market or to reallocate workers internally, the employer must assess the benefits (if any) to be derived from restricting the choice of potential applicants to fill a vacancy. When the job to be performed requires unskilled manual labour, these benefits are likely to be very limited. Unless custom or union power intervene, the employer is likely to look outside to the local external labour market (or its equivalent) for assistance, by taking on casual labour perhaps, or by hiring subcontractors.

As a result, internal labour markets are normally confined to those members of an organization's workforce who possess particular skills, whether of manual dexterity or of administrative or intellectual acumen: to those who belong in what McKay and Whitelaw (1977, p. 30) describe as the "primary sector" of employment. And the main reason why employers seek to fill vacancies internally relates to the way in which these skills are acquired, authenticated and retained (Koike, 1983).

The acquisition of skills is a process of investment in human capital. When an employing organization chooses to operate an internal labour market, it is likely to do so for one or more of the following reasons:

- (a) because it wishes to protect or enhance the return on an investment in human capital (embodied in the employees concerned) which it has itself financed;
- (b) because it sees the implementation of such a market as a means of investing in human capital, through "on-the-job training" across a sequence of posts;
- (c) because the skills required are of a specific kind peculiar to the organization concerned, and are therefore unavailable on the external market;
- (d) because it hopes to encourage a more favourable attitude amongst its employees, both with regard to the acquisition of skills and in the acceptance of technological changes which might otherwise be regarded as job-threatening (Hanami, 1982);
- (e) because the internal candidate just happens to be the best person for the job.

These are the main general reasons for operating internal labour markets, they can be defined independently of particular institutional, historical and cultural contexts, and they

subsume several other commonly stated advantages, such as positive effects upon loyalty (McKay and Whitelaw, 1981, p. 91), and hence the protection of accumulated investments in human capital, and upon morale, and with it short-term productivity and willingness to be trained. In practice, however, these considerations are often institutionalized and subsumed within codes and customs of personnel management which are applied automatically to individual cases, generally in the context of the individual's *career* and associated policies and institutions for *career development*, as will be demonstrated with particular reference to Japan in Section 2.6.

It is also clear that internal labour markets can be mutually reinforcing, if the external equivalent in a particular segment is small and/or inhabited by those who have been rejected by the leading employers. This, by and large, is the market situation that has prevailed for managerial and technical workers in postwar Japan. While it is true that there are specific cultural reasons for Japan's strong adherence to internal labour markets, such as the psychological benefits derived from "belonging" within a group context, large Japanese employers have continued to operate the famous "lifetime employment system" primarily because it has proved economically beneficial for them to do so.

We shall explore the extent and characteristics of the Japanese "lifetime employment system" in Section 2.4, and also take the opportunity to examine some of the costs associated with rigidly entrenched internal labour markets. But before we plunge too deeply into the specifics of the Japanese case, we should briefly consider some of the more general reasons why employees may choose to acquiesce to the wishes of employers, and agree to the implementation of internal labour markets and associated personnel transfers.

From the employee's point of view, the advantages of internal labour markets can be summarized by the words security, continuity, and privilege. Security comes with the assurance of a modicum of continuity in the employee's career, with regular progression from one post to the next managed, if not on the employee's behalf, then at least without the stress associated with job searches in the external market. As for privilege, this refers not only to access to information about new jobs and to the jobs themselves on a level that is denied to persons outside the organization, but also to the accumulation of status and power that comes with continuous employment, including the accumulation of employer-specific training and expertise as a form of investment in human capital, which itself makes the employee less vulnerable to dismissal. Conversely, the longer an individual remains with the same employer, so the greater may be the costs of leaving, in terms of lost pension rights, lost status, and in particular, failure to share in the returns from specific training (Koike, 1988, pp. 260-1; Sell, 1990, pp. 20-21). In other words, whatever the initial attractions of the internal labour market may be, eventually the

employee's support for it may derive less from its inherent advantages than from the fear of painful withdrawal symptoms.

2.4 Elements of the Japanese "lifetime employment system"

Having examined the general characteristics and functions of internal labour markets from the standpoint of both the employing organization and the individual employee, it is time to consider some of the specifics of Japanese methods, both as a practical illustration of points already made, and as an introduction to the case study materials to be presented in subsequent chapters.

It was noted in Section 2.1 that large Japanese companies (along with public sector bureaucracies) operate very strong internal labour markets: indeed, Japan is internationally renowned for the "lifetime employment system" (*shûshin koyô*) and for the benefits which that system is thought to confer on employers and employees alike. Under this system, core employees are hired directly from universities, colleges and (occasionally) senior high schools and granted tenure of employment, generally through custom and collective bargaining in the private sector, and through law in the public sector (Yamaguchi, 1983; Tsuji, 1984, Chapter 5), until the age of retirement. In return for this moral and contractual guarantee of secure employment, the employee concedes to the employer the right, generally after due consultation in person or through the company union, to determine not only the tasks that he or she will be expected to perform, but also the locations where the work must be done. Internal transfers provide an important means of ensuring that the core employees are used as rationally and efficiently as possible, avoiding redundancies and shortages in key positions (Ono, 1973, p. 4). The system applies primarily to white-collar employees, but can also include the elite amongst blue-collar workers in large companies, a group that has undergone the distinctive process of career systematization described by Koike (1983, p. 38) as "white-collarization".

There are two important and related points to be made about the lifetime employment system. First, it covers only a fraction of the Japanese labour force, and second, it illustrates perhaps better than any other example some of the demerits of internal labour markets which the employer must find ways to overcome.

As regards coverage, estimates naturally vary according to the particular definitions adopted, and while it is clear that membership is confined to a minority of the labour force (Levine, 1983, p. 31), some estimates put the figure as high as 30% (Abegglen and Stalk, 1985, p. 201), although this is clearly an overstatement of the population at risk of a geographical transfer, since not all organizations have the necessary multi-regional structure. The fact that the share of the workforce enjoying lifetime protection is not



higher can be attributed in part to the fact that workers in smaller enterprises do not enjoy the benefits of participation in the "lifetime employment" system, a manifestation of the "dual structure" of the Japanese economy, and in part to the inherent disadvantages of the system, which employers attempt to minimize by restricting its application to as limited a group of permanent core workers as possible. Simply stated, the key demerit is inflexibility, as reflected for example in the difficulties which employers face in trimming the labour force during recessions (discussed below in Chapters 4 and 6), and in disposing of staff who have been granted tenure but who subsequently prove incompetent.

Two ways of injecting more flexibility in matters of workforce adjustment are first, to hire untenured "temporary" employees, and second, to subcontract as much work as possible to subsidiaries and small suppliers, whose workers are unlikely to enjoy much job security. When recession strikes, the burden of adjustment can be passed on to these vulnerable groups, while the "permanent" workforce is protected, although as Dore et. al. (1989, p. 32) point out, the importance of temporary employees as "shock absorbers" can be overstated. Major employers can also minimize their obligations by setting the retirement age as low as possible, and in this respect the use of the term "lifetime employment" is extremely misleading: in most large Japanese organizations, the normal age of retirement is between 55 and 60 years of age, and former "permanent" employees must rely upon a second career to provide financial support for several years thereafter. And as we shall see in Chapter 6, in extreme circumstances employers can water down their commitments by establishing subsidiaries, joint ventures or commercial arrangements into which surplus but tenured employees are decanted, ostensibly as transferees, but in practice as travellers on the road to contract severance and redundancy. Surplus employees can also be dumped on established but subordinate firms within the *keiretsu*. Such transfers are unlikely to be welcomed in difficult times, but the recipient firm cannot easily refuse if it is otherwise heavily dependent upon the parent (Dore et. al., 1989, p. 30), and besides, the transfer route may already have been lubricated by an earlier colonization of senior management positions.

As for the risk of hiring incompetents, this can be reduced by combining rigorous initial entry criteria, based especially upon formal academic qualifications, with comprehensive programmes of on-the-job training that may last throughout the employee's working life. Those who slip through this net can be filtered out later on and transferred to subsidiaries where they will do less harm (Yoshino, 1968, pp. 151-152), or be encouraged to quit through measures which may include constant job transfers or the threat of them (Cole, 1971, p. 121).

The successful managerial or technical employee in a large Japanese organization is likely to spend most of his working life within that organization, and will experience mobility within the internal labour market as a personal career, a structured sequence of postings interconnected by transfers, some of which may have a geographical manifestation. The same may be true of the skilled blue-collar worker, although his career is more likely to be confined to posts within a single factory (Koike, 1988, p. 75). This suggests that mobility within internal labour markets may be examined not only in terms of structural constraints imposed by the organization, and the abilities and aspirations of the employees involved, but also using the integrated approach of the *organizational career*, which Salt (1990, p. 59) defines as "a relatively standardized set of roles to be performed by an employee which interact with a relatively patterned flow of individuals through these roles".

It is possible to examine the career as an abstract concept, and to specify on theoretical grounds those points within a career at which mobility is most likely to occur. In Section 2.6, however, we will attempt to achieve the same end through different means, by charting the "typical" career of a managerial employee within a large Japanese organization. This will allow us not only to make some observations about careers in general and their relationship to transfers, but also to narrow the focus down in preparation for the empirical evidence to be presented in subsequent chapters.

First, however, we need to establish a basic vocabulary to describe the various forms that personnel transfers can take, through a typology that is specific to the Japanese case, but which does not preclude the possibility of comparative analysis, since it is based upon the universal variables of time and (organizational) space.

2.5 A typology of transfers under the "lifetime employment system"

Japanese management systems incorporate a variety of personnel transfer practices, which can be differentiated on the basis of the period of time over which the transferee can expect to remain absent from his or her former place of work, and whether or not the destination is part of the core organization, a subsidiary, or even an otherwise unrelated body. The main types of transfer are shown in Figure 2.1, which includes romanizations of the appropriate Japanese terms as well as the English alternatives that will be employed in this thesis.

Two important caveats should be entered concerning this typology. First, the use of English language terms must not be taken to imply precise equivalence with the use of the same terms in other, non-Japanese contexts, because of underlying differences in personnel management practices. As already stated, the typology is specific to the Japanese case. Second, the terms recorded in Figure 2.1 are often given distinctive

meanings by different organizations within Japan and by academic and official commentators, thereby introducing an unfortunate element of ambiguity and inconsistency. The discussion of the "U-Turn" phenomenon in Chapter 1 demonstrates that this is not an uncommon problem in dealing with Japanese topics, and great care must be taken to ensure that inconsistencies of use are minimized. Nevertheless, the typology does illuminate the variable circumstances under which transfer activity can arise, and will help to give structure to the discussion in subsequent chapters. With these caveats in mind, we may proceed to examine the various types in detail.

Figure 2.1 Types of personnel transfers in large Japanese organizations

		PERIOD	
		Short Term	Long Term
DESTINATION	Within Core Organization	Inter-Branch Loan (shanai haken, shokan ôen)	Permanent Transfer (haichi tenkan) Job Rotation (tenkin)
	Beyond Core Organization	Inter-Company Loan (shagai haken, tasha ôen)	Outplacement (shukkô)

Source: Adapted from Wiltshire (1992).

The simplest occurrence is the permanent transfer of an individual from one location to another and normally within the same organization: from one steelworks, for example, to another operated by the same company, or between the branches of a bank. This is known as *haichi tenkan* in Japanese, and differs from an inter-branch loan (*shanai haken* or *shokan ôen*) with respect both to time (loans generally last for no more than a year) and contractual arrangements (in permanent transfers the contract of employment is normally transferred to the destination, but is retained at the origin in the case of loans). Both types usually involve the transfer of skilled manual or office workers, whereas job rotation (*tenkin*) is largely confined to managerial staff on defined career tracks, who spend one to three years at a particular post before moving on. The term *tenkin*, however, is often used to describe transfers of any type, as will become clear in Chapter 3. One term not shown in Figure 2.1, but which is often employed in conjunction with *tenkin* in its narrower usage, is *jinji idô* (staff reshuffle), the distinction between the two being that while *tenkin* generally implies a degree of geographical separation between origin and destination, *jinji idô* includes promotion in situ.

An inter-company loan (*shagai haken* or *tasha ôen*) usually lasts for up to a year, but the destination lies outside the core organization, and may be an otherwise unrelated

company or an established member of the core organization's *keiretsu*. During the period of the loan the individual remains under contract to the lending firm, and special arrangements must be made to ensure continuity in wages, benefits and seniority (Yamaguchi, 1978). It is common practice for the dominant organization in an industrial or commercial group to supply personnel to other companies, either on short term inter-company loan, or on a more long term basis, where the latter is referred to as outplacement (*shukkô*).

Nagano (1989, summarized in English by Sugeno, 1989) describes four main types of outplacement. For three of these types, transfers designed to improve the internal cohesion of the group as a whole, those designed to strengthen the managerial or technical expertise of a related firm, and those designed to broaden the employment experience of the transferee, the move is likely to be temporary (though perhaps lasting several years), and as with shorter loans the workers affected retain their contractual relationship with the core organization, and are compensated for any shortfall in wages or working conditions at the destination. For the fourth type however, transfers designed to get rid of surplus employees, outplacement may well be the prelude to a permanent change of employment, through a transfer of the contract of employment to the destination firm (known as *iseki* or *tenseki*). When the surplus is likely to be temporary, however, the employer may prefer to implement a short term loan instead, a practice which has become increasingly popular since the early 1970s.

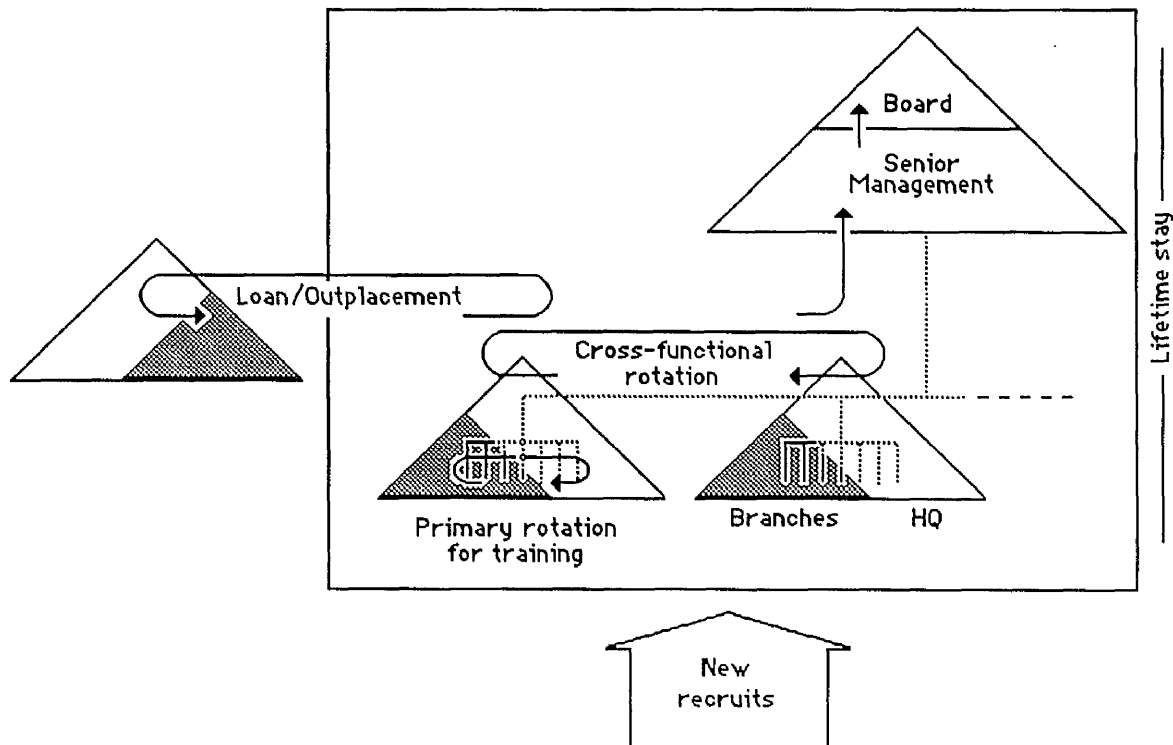
In the chapters that follow, examples will be provided of each type of transfer, with particular attention being paid to job rotation in Chapter 5 and to the other types in Chapter 6. To conclude this chapter, however, we will attempt to integrate some of the ideas presented thus far, by returning to the concept of the career and describing how, in the typical white-collar managerial career, some of these transfer types may come into play and in the process become the cause of residential migration.

2.6 Career mobility of managers under the "lifetime employment system"

The new recruit into the management stream of a large Japanese organization (whether public or private) is likely to experience a number of moves early on in his career, the purpose being to introduce him to the various facets of the organization's operations as a form of on-the-job training. Suzuki (1981, p. 34) describes the early training of a typical "generalist" manager as a process of rotations across functions (and, coincidentally, across space), with the breadth of training increasing the higher the individual rises up the corporate ladder (Figure 2.2). Such practices are by no means unique to Japan of course: Salt (1990, p. 56) suggests that "all large organizations transfer staff on a recurrent basis as part of career development", Edstrom and Galbraith (1977) identify similar patterns in

American corporations, and Salt (1988, p. 390) includes a diagram of a generalized "structured internal labour market" which broadly resembles Suzuki's concept, other than in allowing for more open exchange with the external labour market.

Figure 2.2 Job rotation during the Japanese manager's career



Source: Modified from Suzuki (1981), p. 34.

Note: The modifications make provision for loans/outplacements and for the geographical dimension of rotation. Permanent exits and mid-career hirings are excluded.

After perhaps ten to fifteen years of "training-through-rotation", the young Japanese manager may settle down to a more lengthy period in one job, but will still be expected to move to new posts, and with it perhaps new places, as part of regular career development and preparation for higher things. These moves will be a combination of job rotations (which will predominate), plus inter-branch loans and temporary outplacements. His performance is evaluated throughout by his superiors (Koike, 1988, p. 222), and these transfers also have a useful side-effect, in that there is no time for the transferee to put down roots in any one locality, so he will tend to identify with the organization instead.

As the employee ages, the number of posts available to him at higher levels in the organization's hierarchy naturally diminishes, and competition between peers heats up. At this stage, transfers will begin to take on greater significance as a means of "parking" older members of staff who have reached the limits of their upward progression, (and of their perceived competence), out of the way on the periphery of the organization.

Anthropologists such as Skinner (1983) and Noguchi (1983) who have studied "career frustration" in Japan have detected a strong geographical flavour to the typical organization's response. An early and instructive example is provided by Thomas Rohlen in his book For Harmony and Strength (1974), when he notes of the bank "Uedagin" that:

"Smaller branches are generally situated in more rural areas, and reassignment to such isolated and unimportant places is a kind of exile worse than a simple reduction of command. In a similar fashion, less competent men in the ranks below section chief also tend to be given positions in the less important offices, some of them spending almost their entire careers moving from small branch to small branch and never experiencing the more glamorous and more challenging work of the main office. In these ways people judged incompetent or undesirable are shuffled about in the system without being dismissed or demoted". (ibid., p. 149)

Again, this process is by no means unique to Japan: Sell (1990, pp. 21-22) speaks of a similar "headquarters-boonies" dimension to intracorporate transfers in the United States, while McKay and Whitelaw (1981, p. 113) suggest that exchanges of managers between headquarters and the periphery act as a giant "filtering process", in which each candidate awaits "that distant day when he is summoned back to Rome" (Whyte, 1956, p. 275).

Other employees in a similar situation may simply be left to serve out their time passively, "sitting by the window" (*madogiwa*) as the vernacular expression has it, until formal retirement arrives. Over recent years, however, the rapid ageing of the workforce, combined with the effect of industrial restructuring on the demand for senior managers, has forced many commercial organizations to seek more active solutions to overstaffing problems at senior levels, by promoting mass outplacements to subsidiaries, which may have been custom-designed for the purpose (Yoshino, 1968, pp. 151-152), and even to otherwise unrelated firms.

But what of the successful manager, the individual who is marked for the top? As his career takes him into positions which give him authority over his elders and former colleagues, there may be times when he is moved sideways to avoid embarrassment (Craig, 1975), but otherwise he will experience many more moves, sucked upwards as it were by the vacuum created through retirements at the highest levels, though as his position becomes more powerful more of these moves are likely to be between desks at headquarters rather than between different geographical locations. Nevertheless, he may still be posted to major provincial offices from time to time, as at earlier points in his career, to ensure that policies emanating from the centre are correctly implemented on the periphery. This combination of lateral and vertical mobility will describe a spiral in space-time, a pattern that characterizes the careers of senior managers - or "spiralists", as

Watson (1964, p. 147) so aptly calls them - just about everywhere, and which also helps to account for the fact that while other forms of migration taper off sharply with increasing age, for transferees the fall-off is much slower (Johnson and Salt, 1980, p. 281).

Once he reaches the pinnacle of his career, the senior manager will be propelled out of the "top" of the organization through retirement into one of several possible destinations. If he hails from a private company, he may look forward to a place on the board, or to a job with a subsidiary or subcontractor arranged for him as a reward for services rendered - and with one last geographical move thrown in. For the retiring senior bureaucrat, post-retirement options include the public, the private and increasingly, the joint public/private "third" sector. Much depends on the ministry for which he has worked. A senior bureaucrat from a prestigious and powerful ministry should experience little difficulty finding an executive post in one of Japan's major corporations; perhaps one with which he had some contact as a regulator or advisor during his period of public service. This smooth journey into post-retirement employment is popularly known as *amakudari* - descent from the heavens. Retirees from less influential positions may be parachuted into one of the many public corporations which have been set up, in part at least, in order to accommodate their needs (Skinner, 1983, p. 59; Dore, 1985, p. 21).

This then is the typical course of a Japanese manager's career, and it is clear that there are various points in such a career at which geographical mobility is likely to occur, as will be illustrated in the case study of Labour Ministry bureaucrats to be presented in Chapter 5. Passing reference will also be made to careers in Chapter 6, when we examine the fate of tenured blue-collar workers in the face of structural change, although as the shop-floor level mobility is generally more localized, inter-regional moves occur mainly in association with structural adjustment, and when they do occur they are usually permanent, one-way transfers.

2.7 Summary of Chapter 2

In this Chapter we have examined some of the problems that arise in attempting to define personnel transfers and the internal labour markets within which they take place, both in general terms and in the specific context of Japan. We have discussed some of the difficulties that such transfers present in the face of traditional theories of labour migration, and the reasons why employers may choose to put transfers into effect. After reviewing some of the salient characteristics of the Japanese "lifetime employment system", and of the transfers which that system calls forward, we concluded the discussion by describing the incidence of mobility in the typical managerial career, noting

in the process that Japanese career patterns at this level appear to have much in common with those found in large organizations elsewhere.

We will return to individuals and specific organizations in later chapters of this thesis. In the next two chapters, however, the focus will be set at a wider, aggregate level, as we review information available from published sources on the scale of interregional migration linked to personnel transfers in Japan, and in particular, seek to establish whether such migration displays distinct geographical regularities.

Chapter 3 The Characteristics of Interregional Transferee Migrants in Japan: A Review of the Evidence

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter we examine the extent to which regularities can be detected in aggregate data on the characteristics of interregional transferee migrants in Japan and the organizations which employ them.

We begin with a review of the main sources of information on personnel transfers in Japan, and assess their adequacy in the light of the typology of transfers established in Chapter 2. We then examine the incidence of transfers by sector and company size, explore the personal characteristics of transferees (gender, age profiles, formal education, occupation and family size), and assess the extent to which transferees perform an active role in the decision to move. The approach is primarily descriptive, but the description is informed by the concepts and generalizations that were discussed in the previous chapter.

This material serves as a prelude to Chapter 4, in which we examine some of the periodicities inherent in transfer activity, before moving on to the central theme of this thesis - the spatial characteristics of transfer activity.

3.2 Data sources

Published data on personnel transfers in Japan take a wide variety of forms. At one extreme there is the crude, unprocessed raw material of company and civil service staff directories, which in isolation are just snapshots of an organization at rest, but which in combination can reveal the full dimensions of mobility over time. There are also directories, especially for government employees, which summarize each individual's career path, while ordinary newspapers, the business press and specialist magazines each carry detailed listings of the most recent transfers that have taken place in leading organizations - including the name of each transferee, the post assumed and the post relinquished, together with locations where necessary. Such material forms the basis of the detailed case study at the organizational level to be presented in Chapter 5, a case study which nevertheless absorbs only the tiniest fraction of the raw information on individual and identifiable transfers that is openly available in print. Indeed, the volume and quality of such information is perhaps unrivalled anywhere else in the world, in part because of a comparatively relaxed attitude towards the inherent "confidentiality" of personal data in Japan, but also because of an intense demand for data of this kind - to identify key business contacts, to keep track of former colleagues and classmates (Britain

is not alone in having strong "old boy" networks), and as a pointer to one's own career prospects.

In this chapter and the next, however, we shall be concerned with a different type of data: processed information derived not from the personnel records of specific employees, but from questionnaire surveys directed at individual interregional migrants, who may also be transferees, and at organizations which operate spatially differentiated internal labour markets.

We have already made reference to two surveys of the former type in Chapter 1: the National Land Agency's special report on interregional migration in the early 1980s (Kokudochô, 1982), and the sequence of reports published every five years by the Tôkyô Metropolitan Government (Tôkyô-to, 1978, 1983, 1988). These are, without doubt, the best materials of their kind available, and both rely upon the same data collection method: a self-administered questionnaire distributed (admittedly in dissimilar ways) to a sample of individuals who have undergone the formal procedures of the Residents Registration Law, under which all changes in domicile must be reported to the municipal authorities. We have also discussed some of the problems associated with this method, including the fixed menu of "reasons for migration", in Chapter 1.2, and further technical details of these (and other) surveys are given in Appendix A. The National Land Agency report would appear to be the only study published by central government which uses this method, but there are other examples of surveys by prefectural governments, particularly for smaller prefectures that have experienced depopulation problems, such as Yamanashi, Shimane and Yamaguchi, and also at least one example - from Kôbe City - of a survey conducted by municipal authorities.

A characteristic feature of most of these surveys is the use of the term *tenkin* to describe a personnel transfer. We have already seen that this term is ambiguous: in the narrow sense, it refers only to job rotation, but in the context of these surveys it could mean much more, depending upon the interpretation that the migrant chooses to place upon it. In few of the questionnaires is any distinction made between rotations, permanent transfers, outplacements or loans, (the National Land Agency survey is an exception in referring explicitly to *tenkin* and *shukkô*), and while it is reasonable to assume that most rotations are covered, the reaction of a worker newly outplaced to a company in a different area is unclear: he may choose "transfer", or "change of employment", or some "other" reason. What does seem likely, therefore, is that the true influence of internal labour market activity (including loans) is systematically understated in these reports, if only by a few percentage points.

The usual sources of data on interregional migration in Japan, the annual reports based upon the residents registers, the periodic national census, and some of the annual labour force surveys, all fail to capture transfers as a specific mobility type, although transferees are certainly included within the aggregate statistics. The reason for this oversight may be that from a public policy perspective at least, transfers have not generally been thought of as a "problem": the needs of transferees are met by employers, and there are no obvious implications for public expenditure in areas such as housing, employment creation and depopulation policy. Nor is this oversight specific to Japan: the author is not aware of any national census that addresses the issue. Nevertheless, questions on transfers have been included in other periodic censuses and surveys, most notably in the Housing Survey, though unfortunately the issue was not covered in the most recent Housing Survey conducted in 1988. The question of housing the transferee is an important one, and will receive separate attention in Chapter 7.

Other official data sources covering individual transferees include one-off surveys conducted by government agencies, most notably by the Ministry of Labour and by the Ministry of Health and Welfare's Institute of Population Problems. The former has concentrated in particular upon transfers as a component of "structural adjustment", with the emphasis upon outplacements, and although some information has also been published on other transfer practices, this has normally been on an aspatial basis (e.g. Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1985, 1987a, 1989, 1990b, 1991b). The Institute of Population Problems' surveys of interregional migration are superior in this respect (e.g. Kôseishô, 1988), but they are of very limited use in the present context because a different problem: a focus upon "lifetime migration" or migration over a lengthy period, which systematically underestimates the importance of transfer activity, which for many managerial employees at least can occur many times during a normal working life.

The other major source of information on personnel transfer practices in Japan consists of surveys not of individuals but of organizations, and especially of private sector companies. These surveys are of two types: those designed to illuminate conventional personnel management practices, particularly as regards the training, promotion and remuneration of white-collar employees, and those which are concerned with transfers as a means of coping with structural change, and especially with cyclical and secular pressures to reduce staffing levels in manufacturing. In both cases, the leading source of survey reports is the Ministry of Labour and its affiliates, with information available both from regular census-type surveys (such as the Survey of Employment Trends) and from one-off investigations of particular topics. Other sources include confederations of company unions or major employers, such as the steel industry organizations (Tekkô Rôren and Tekkô Renmei) whose survey results are used in Chapter 6, and private-sector companies which seek to benefit from providing

management information to industry. The collection and publication of this information addresses practical needs: establishing norms in the provision of disturbance allowances, for example, as the basis for informed negotiations between companies and their unions, and highlighting areas where changes in public policy may improve the efficiency with which labour is deployed.

In surveys directed mainly at training and promotion practices, transfers are usually described by the word *tenkin*, and it is clear from the context that the word is to be understood in the narrow sense of job rotation. In surveys which deal mainly with structural change, however, one also finds explicit reference to *haichi tenkan* as a means of redistributing blue-collar workers within a company, and in recent years a great deal of attention has also been directed to outplacements (*shukkô*), the incidence of which increased dramatically after the sharp revaluation of the yen which occurred in the mid-1980s. Surveys of outplacements are normally concerned with mobility amongst older workers, the assumption being that such outplacements will eventually become permanent.

Information on the personnel practices of organizations is obviously vital to an overall understanding of how transfers are managed and controlled, but these sources do suffer from one important limitation: by and large, the spatial dimension of transfer activity is ignored, other than details of matters such as regional differences in housing subsidies and distance banding in removals allowances. We may learn that many companies in a particular sector systematically rotate their employees, or that many former steelworkers have been outplaced to other companies, but we are rarely told what proportion of this activity is expressed as interregional mobility. For the latter, which is central to the concerns of this thesis, we must rely for the present upon case studies of individual organizations.

Finally, a qualified note of caution. We shall draw together the results of various surveys which rely upon diverse research methods and have been undertaken at different times. This is likely to matter: transfers associated with industrial restructuring, for example, are more likely to occur during recessions, while outplacements appear to have boomed in recent years. It is difficult to be precise, however, about the likely effects of mixing surveys from different years, and it is also unfortunate that the most useful survey - the one conducted by the National Land Agency - is already a decade old. We must be careful in drawing conclusions therefore, but we must also keep the problem in perspective: far more is known about interregional transfers in Japan in the 1980s than in any previous decade and, in all likelihood, in any other country.

3.3 What sorts of organizations implement personnel transfers?

Direct information on the implementation of interregional transfers by organizations of different types is difficult to obtain, due not only to the absence of an adequate typology of organizations for this purpose, but also to a lack of surveys at the organization level which specifically ask about the spatial characteristics of transfer activity. We are forced, therefore, to rely in particular upon whatever information individual transferees can provide about their employers.

Table 3.1 shows the post-migration distribution of employment by sector for transferee migrants in 1980-81 as revealed by the National Land Agency survey and, as with most of the tables that follow, irrespective of the distance over which the transferee actually moved his or her residence. For comparison, figures are also given on the employment pattern for all migrants in the survey, irrespective of the cause of migration, and on the national distribution of employment in the closest year for which comparable data are available.

Both in absolute and relative terms, the largest single employer of transferee migrants is the government sector. Government employees are almost twice as common amongst transferees than amongst migrants in general, and there are over seven times as many of them as would be expected given the very small share of the government sector within the non-primary employment total. Included in this category are senior bureaucrats and other government personnel in transit between the headquarters and prefectural branches and affiliates of the various central ministries, as well as teachers, professors and other technical staff. These are the workers most subject to *tenkin* transfers in the narrow sense of job rotations, as part and parcel of career development, and some of their number will be examined in detail in Chapter 5. In the absence of comparable international data, however, it is impossible to say whether the dominance of the government sector is a distinctive feature of personnel transfers in Japan, or simply a natural and universal consequence of the prevalence of bureaucratic forms in public service.

Only one other sector is "over-represented" in the transfers stream: finance, insurance and real estate. Finance sector workers are only slightly more common amongst migrants in general than in the workforce as a whole, but are found nearly three times as often amongst transferees. As with the government sector, most of these transferees are white-collar employees undergoing rotation, through bank branches, insurance offices and the like, within rigid hierarchical systems of sections, divisions and bureaux, and along career paths which may lead eventually to senior positions at headquarters.

Table 3.1 Employment by sector, transferee migrants (1980-81), all interregional migrants (1980-81) and non-primary sector workforce (1982), Japan

Unit: %

	Transferee migrants	All interregional migrants	Non-primary sector workforce
Sector			
Government	29.5	17.1	3.8
Manufacturing	18.8	19.9	27.4
Services	11.6	23.5	21.5
Finance and insurance	11.3	5.3	4.2
Wholesale and retail trade	11.3	14.8	24.8
Other	17.6	19.4	18.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Non-primary sector excludes agriculture, forestry, fishing, forestry and mining.

Sources: For migrants: Calculated from data in Kokudochô (1982), p. 52; for non-primary sector workforce: Tôyô Keizai Shinpôsha (1984), pp. 130-131.

In all other sectors, transferees are encountered less frequently than one would expect given the structure of employment in Japan as a whole. The manufacturing sector emerges as the second most important for transfers in absolute terms, but there is no way of telling what the relative contributions of job rotations, permanent transfers and outplacements have been to the total, and the sector is grossly under-represented relative to its contribution to employment.

Slightly different results emerge from the 1981 and 1986 surveys of migration undertaken by the Tôkyô Metropolitan Government. Table 3.2 shows that government employment was only the third ranking sector for transfers between Tôkyô and all other prefectures in 1981, and the second ranking in 1986, whereas manufacturing was the leading sector in both years. Nevertheless, government workers remain strongly over-represented, as are workers in finance and insurance. Any number of factors may account for the detailed differences between the Tôkyô data and those for Japan as a whole, including the fact that National Land Agency survey is less reliable, based as it is on a comparatively small sample. On the surface at least it appears odd that government bureaucrats are not represented even more strongly in the Tôkyô data than nationally, given that the city accommodates all of the great central government ministries. The picture presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 is a comparative one between sectors, however, and given that several of the central ministries run large networks of regional branch offices, while most manufacturing and wholesaling concerns operate at only a small number of sites in addition to the headquarters or representative office in Tôkyô, it can be

hypothesized that, relative to other sectors, government service affords more possibilities for interregional transfers that by-pass Tōkyō, whereas the dominant flows in the private sector are more likely to be to and from headquarters buildings, and hence to and from the national capital. Far more data would be required to test this hypothesis, however, than are currently available.

Table 3.2 Employment by sector, transferee migrants (1981, 1986) and non-primary sector workforce (1982), Tōkyō

Unit: %

	Transferee Migrants (1981)	Transferee Migrants (1986)	Non-Primary Sector Workforce (1982)
Sector			
Government	14.5	16.7	3.1
Manufacturing	23.7	23.7	24.4
Services	13.5	16.1	23.3
Finance and insurance	14.9	14.4	6.5
Wholesale and retail trade	13.7	10.8	26.7
Other	19.7	18.3	16.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes: Non-primary sector excludes agriculture, forestry, fishing, forestry and mining. The equivalent migration survey undertaken in 1976 did not explore the sectoral composition of employment.

Sources: For migrants: Calculated from data in Tōkyō-to (1983, 1988), Tables 93 and 94; for non-primary sector workforce: Tōyō Keizai Shinpōsha (1984), pp. 130-131.

We would certainly expect, other things being equal, that migration linked to personnel transfers would be more common in large organizations, if only because size (as measured by total employment) is likely to be correlated with the internal geographical differentiation which is required before movements between places can occur. Direct evidence comes from a survey conducted by the Ministry of Labour in 1984-85 amongst a representative sample of private companies with 100 or more employees (Rōdō Daijin Kanbō, 1985, p. 15), in which respondents were pressed on whether or not they had ever arranged transfers (*tenkin*) for their staff which had necessitated a change of residence. The results show a strong relationship between company size and the implementation of such transfers for white-collar staff. While 80.5% of all companies in the sample had arranged change of residence transfers for white-collar staff at some time, the same was true for 93.7% of companies with 500 or more employees, as compared with "only" 69.1% of companies with 100-299 employees - itself a very high figure. The survey revealed that a high proportion of companies (45.0%) had also implemented transfers for blue-collar workers at some point which had required residential mobility, with incidence again strongly related to company size, ranging from 24.5% for

companies with 100-299 employees to a high of 66.7% for companies with 5,000 or more employees.

This need not imply, of course, that the number of individual employees affected at any one time is especially large. Nevertheless, a related survey of individual employees (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1985, p. 37) does reveal that 38.7% of male white-collar workers in the sample had been required to undertake a transfer at some point during their careers that had involved a change of residence, a figure which again varies markedly and predictably with company size, from 30.2% in companies with 100-299 employees to almost one half (49.9%) in companies with 5,000 or more employees. These figures still underestimate the true career incidence of transfers and migration, because they ignore the possibility of multiple transfers during the career of any one individual, an issue that was not addressed in the survey. Nevertheless, it is clear that a strong relationship does indeed exist between company size and the implementation of personnel transfers, at least as far as job rotations are concerned.

According to the Labour Ministry's Survey of Employment Management (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1990b), there is also a strong relationship between company size and the implementation of permanent transfers (*haichi tenkan*). Table 3.3 shows that during 1989 such transfers occurred in barely a third of companies with 30-99 employees, but in virtually all companies with 1,000 employees or more. The table also demonstrates that only a tiny proportion of small companies implemented transfers that required a change of residence on the part of the transferee, whereas this happened in almost every large company.

Table 3.3 Companies which implemented permanent transfers (*haichi tenkan*) of regular employees during 1989, Japan

Unit: % of companies

	Implemented permanent transfers	Implemented permanent transfers that required a change of residence
Company size (employees)		
5,000 or more	99.7	96.1
1,000 - 4,999	98.9	85.4
300 - 999	93.3	61.1
100 - 299	72.6	28.6
30 - 99	33.9	7.0
TOTAL		47.0
16.9		

Source: Rôdô Daijin Kanbô (1990b), p. 55.

Table 3.4 Workers outplaced (*shukkô*) during 1988, by company size and sector, Japan

Unit: %

	By company of origin	By company of destination
Company size (employees)		
1,000 or more	52.2	8.2
300 - 999	14.5	17.8
100 - 299	9.2	25.7
30 - 99	5.6	26.4
5 - 29	10.8	17.5
1 - 4	2.4	0.0
na*	5.3	4.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Sector		
Manufacturing	36.5	22.4
Services	14.4	34.0
Finance and insurance	5.6	6.8
Wholesale and retail trade	11.6	28.8
Transport and communications	5.5	6.7
Other	26.4	1.5
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Note: *Balancing item: the total (of 67,400) includes government employees. The figures are for persons newly outplaced in January-December 1988: as of June 30, 1988, the total number of workers currently on outplacement was more than four times as many, at 267,300.

Source: Adjusted from tables in Rôdô Daijin Kanbô (1990a), pp. 23-24.

Company size is also a key factor with respect to outplacements, especially in differentiating between origins and destinations. Table 3.4 is taken from the Ministry of Labour's Survey of Employment Trends (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1990a), and refers to outplacements implemented during 1988, irrespective (unfortunately) of the location of the origin and destination companies, and excluding public employees. The table demonstrates that such transfers are overwhelmingly from larger to smaller companies, which is again to be expected, irrespective of whether the motive of the outplacement is one of the three positive alternatives described by Sugeno (1989: see Chapter 2 above), or simply to get rid of surplus employees. Table 3.4 also shows the distribution of outplaced personnel by sector before and after the move, and suggests a large flow of employees out of manufacturing and into trade and services. The picture is complicated, however, by another large flow out of the "others" sector, the composition of which is unclear, and also by a failure to distinguish between those parts of manufacturing which

are expanding and those declining, since a large flow within the manufacturing sector can be inferred. For example, more detailed tabulations from the same source reveal that in 1988 some 4,800 workers left employment with companies in the steel industry through outplacement, although the net loss was less, at 3,400 workers, because some of the recipient companies were in the same sector. The other major dispatching industry was electrical machinery, from which companies outplaced 6,300 workers, but in this case the net loss was only 500, because large numbers of outplaced workers were taken on by other companies in the same sector.

To summarize, it is clear and by no means surprising that personnel transfers (of various types) in Japan and their associated migration are concentrated in particular economic sectors - especially government, finance, and parts of manufacturing industry - and that larger companies are the main source of transferees in the private sector, although smaller companies are also involved as the destination of many outplacements.

3.4 What sorts of employees are transferred?

Next we shall examine some of the personal characteristics of the transferees themselves. To what extent are they distinguishable on the basis of criteria such as gender, age, educational background, occupation and number of dependents?

3.4.1 Gender

The crude tabulations of the National Land Agency survey (Kokudochô, 1982) suggest that 56% of transferee migrants are male and 44% female. This is misleading. In surveys of this type, the migration of dependents is often attributed to whatever reason the principal migrant has for moving, and since (as we shall see in the next section) transferees are on average much older than most other types of migrant, they normally come in pairs, with children attached. Children below the age of 15 were excluded from the original sample, but housewives were not. If the sex balance is recalculated with housewives removed, 89% of the remaining migrants turn out to be male and only 11% female, a result much more in accordance with what is known to be a distinctive characteristic of the "lifetime employment system": that it is overwhelmingly a male preserve. Similar results emerge from the Tôkyô surveys, in each of which around 95% of the heads of household who entered or left the capital because of a transfer were men.

The gross under-representation of women amongst transferees is not just a matter of access to the "lifetime employment system", however, but also of deliberate discrimination to restrict the geographical mobility of female employees. In a survey of Japan's largest manufacturing and commercial enterprises undertaken in 1988 (Rômu

Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1988), it was found that only 26.7% of the firms questioned had transferred (*tenkin*) any female employees from one location to another over the previous year, (although this figure did rise to 35.6% for companies with more than 3,000 employees, and 40.9% of such companies outside the manufacturing sector), and the majority of firms (56.4%) claimed to avoid transferring women as a matter of principle, with only 14.1% deliberately placing men and women on an entirely equal footing. There was some evidence of a higher rate of acceptance of female mobility in certain sectors of the economy: for example, men and women were treated equally with regard to transfers in 45.5% of large non-manufacturing companies, amongst which finance houses and banks are certain to have featured prominently, and transfers of females were also found to be acceptable in the minority of companies which operate "regional employment systems" (see Chapter 8 below), which limit the maximum distance over which any one individual can be required to move. Nevertheless, despite an increasing propensity of women in Japan to pursue careers in their own right, the migration behaviour of the "dual career" household is still determined primarily by the career interests of the husband - much as is true elsewhere in the industrialized world, including the United Kingdom (Snaith, 1990).

3.4.2 Age

Data from the National Land Agency survey on the age distribution of male transferee migrants are shown in Table 3.5. It is clear that transferees tend to be older than interprefectural migrants as a whole. They are under-represented in every age group below 30, and strongly over-represented between the ages of 35 and 59: 48.4% of transferees are age 35-59, compared with only 31.7% for all male migrants. There are two main reasons for the difference. First, transfers are likely to occur at any point in an individual's career, not just in the early years, which implies a fairly even distribution of transferees between the various age groups, at least until retirement age. Second, in the higher age groups, and particularly beyond the age of thirty, most of the other reasons for migrating from one place to another tend to become less important. Migration associated with educational advancement has essentially disappeared, hardly anyone is still looking for a first job, and the costs of switching to a new job via the external labour market rise steeply just as the opportunities open to potential job-hoppers are diminishing - other, that is, than during periods of extreme labour shortage. The latter occurred in the late 1960s and, especially, in the late 1980s, when the effects of tight labour market conditions were compounded by an influx of overseas companies (particularly financial institutions), and an enhanced demand for technical specialists in fields such as computing stimulated by restructuring efforts in older branches of manufacturing. Whether this led to a reduction in the differentiation of transfer activity by age is unclear, however, and the sharp

increase in the incidence of outplacements of older workers in the late 1980s in sectors such as steel (for which see Chapter 6 below) may well have had a countervailing effect.

Table 3.5 Age distribution of male transferee migrants and all male interregional migrants, Japan, 1980-81

Unit: %

	Transferee migrants	All interregional migrants
Age		
under 20	2.8	7.3
20 - 24	8.3	17.8
25 - 29	17.4	19.2
30 - 34	22.5	20.9
35 - 39	17.1	11.8
40 - 49	20.9	12.9
50 - 59	10.4	7.0
60 and above	0.6	2.9
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Source: Calculated from data in Kokudochô (1982), p. 51.

3.4.3 Education

Table 3.6 reveals that while the majority of transferees in the National Land Agency survey completed their formal education upon graduating from senior high school, the most heavily over-represented group relative to migrants as a whole are university graduates. The high average educational attainment of transferees is to be expected; in Japan a good formal education is the key to entering a better university, graduation from which is in turn the key to obtaining a tenured white-collar job, which then exposes the holder to an increased risk of transfer. In the light of this argument, however, it is appropriate to ask why the proportion of transferees who completed their education after senior high school is so high, and the proportion of university graduates not even higher.

Part of the answer may lie in the nature of the data, which are for migrants of all ages including, as we have already seen, a high proportion of middle-aged transferees. These individuals would have completed their formal education at a time when the proportion of children going on to university was lower than at present, and we would expect, therefore, to see a higher proportion of senior high school graduates among them than would be the case for contemporary new recruits to the management stream. Another part of the answer is that not all transferees are white-collar managers: the figures also include

substantial numbers of workers from the manufacturing sector, many of whom are likely to be blue-collar. In this respect the timing of the survey may be critical: 1980-81 was a period of readjustment after the second "oil shock", a period in which we would expect to find larger numbers of permanent transfers between manufacturing facilities and, in particular, outplacements to other industries, than would be the case in more prosperous times. Insufficient data are available, however, to permit the relative contributions of these factors to be isolated and quantified.

Table 3.6 Educational background of transferee migrants and all interregional migrants, Japan, 1980-81

Unit: %

	Transferee migrants	All interregional migrants
Last institution attended		
Primary or junior high school	7.2	13.3
Senior high school	51.3	49.0
Junior college or technical college	12.8	14.7
University	28.7	22.9
Unknown	0.0	0.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Source: Calculated from data in Kokudochô (1982), p. 46.

As for the slightly lower proportion of junior college graduates amongst transferees, this is readily explained by the fact that the intake of junior colleges is predominantly female, whereas the majority of tenured employees in Japanese organizations are male. When a junior college graduate migrates, therefore, it is unlikely to be in response to a transfer - unless the woman concerned is the spouse of a transferee.

3.4.4 Occupations

Table 3.7 shows the post-mobility occupational distributions for transferee migrants and interregional migrants in general as revealed by the National Land Agency survey, in comparison with data for the national labour force from the closest National Census. The outstanding feature of the table is the high concentration of managers and executives amongst transferees relative both to migrants in general and, in particular, to the labour force as a whole. This result is very much to be expected, of course, given the role of transfers in the career patterns of managerial employees.

Table 3.7 Occupations of transferee migrants (1980-81), all interregional migrants (1980-81) and non-primary sector workforce (1980), Japan

Unit: %

	Transferee migrants	All interregional migrants	Non-primary sector workforce
Occupations			
Managers and executives	22.1	8.3	5.2
Scientific and technical staff	19.1	16.4	9.7
Office workers	21.0	19.4	18.5
Sales and service workers	19.8	21.2	16.4
Other	18.0	34.7	50.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: For migrants: Calculated from data in Kokudochô (1982), p. 51; for non-primary sector workforce: Tôyô Keizai Shimpôsha (1984), p. 128.

The other group that is heavily over-represented amongst transferees relative to the labour force as a whole, though by a factor of two rather than four, is scientific and technical staff. It could be argued that this group is less prone to transfer than managerial staff because of the nature of the work they perform: while the managerial career may take an individual through most parts of (and hence most locations within) an organization, the career of a scientist or technician is more likely to be confined to the more limited range of locations in which laboratories or equivalent facilities are to be found. There is also slight over-representation of office workers below the senior ranks amongst transferees: less than might be expected perhaps, but it must be born in mind that the figures for all migrants (and for the labour force as a whole) do include a large number of people who perform essentially unskilled office jobs. A similar caveat applies for sales and service workers.

At the other extreme, while half of all Japanese workers are employed in occupations other than those already discussed, only 18.0% of transferee migrants remain to be accounted for, despite the fact that this residual includes skilled workers in manufacturing who may be subject to permanent transfer (*haichi tenkan*) as part of the process of industrial restructuring.

3.4.5 Migrants and their dependents

Given that interregional transferees tend to be somewhat older than other migrants, it is reasonable to suppose that a higher proportion of them are married and have children, and that the number of dependents who also move whenever the primary migrant does is greater a well. If we classify migrants according to the number of dependents they take with them, therefore, we would expect the proportion of transferees to rise as the number of dependents increases - an important characteristic, because it implies that the impact of transfers upon migration streams will be much greater than the actual number of jobs being exchanged would indicate.

Strong evidence in support of this hypothesis comes from the latest of the three Tōkyō Metropolitan Government surveys, which reveals that interregional transfers of personnel are far more likely to result in the migration of a family group than is found with any other type of migration. The data in Table 3.8 show the proportion of "cases" of migration between Metropolitan Tōkyō and Japan beyond the Southern Kantō district which can be attributed to personnel transfers, broken down by the number of people who move. A word of explanation is in order. A "case" consists of the primary migrant plus any dependants - be they adults or children - moving with him or her. Only in the situation where the primary migrant moves alone, therefore, is the number of "cases" equal to the number of migrants; otherwise, the number of cases understates the actual number of migrants, by a factor of two, three or whatever. Note, however, that a "case" is not the same as a conventional household or family. If a husband decides to live apart from his family (*tanshin funin* in Japanese) during the period of his transfer, he would enter the statistics as a single, individual primary migrant, and there would be no record of the fact that he even had a family. In other words, there is a systematic bias in the data which tends to understate family size for transferees relative to other types of migrant.

Nevertheless, the data in Table 3.8 are quite dramatic, and reveal a clear and consistent relationship between personnel transfers and the size of the group which migrates. Less than one-fifth of long distance migration to and from Tōkyō which involved the primary migrant moving on his (or her) own could be attributed to transfers, whereas more than four-fifths of cases of groups of four or more people migrating together could be attributed to transfers - a proportion which rises to an extraordinary nine-tenths if we include only employment-related migration in the denominator.

Table 3.8 Interregional transfers as a percentage of migration between Metropolitan Tôkyô and Japan beyond Southern Kantô, by number of persons in a migration "case", 1986

Unit: %

Transfers as a percentage of all migration

Cases involving:

One person (primary migrant only)	18.2
Two persons (primary migrant plus one other)	45.5
Three persons (primary migrant and two others)	59.4
Four+ persons (primary migrant and three+ others)	80.7

All cases	28.5
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Transfers as a percentage of employment-related migration only

Cases involving:

One person (primary migrant only)	34.6
Two persons (primary migrant plus one other)	65.6
Three persons (primary migrant and two others)	77.8
Four+ persons (primary migrant and three+ others)	89.7

All cases	48.5
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Note: A "case" consists of all individuals migrating with the primary migrant and on account of the primary migrant's move.

Source: Calculated from data in Tôkyô-to (1978, 1983, 1988), Tables 22 and 24.

3.5 Transferred by choice?

One of the features that distinguishes personnel transfers from other forms of mobility is the fact that the prime decision-maker is not the individual who is transferred but the organization within which he or she is employed. This need not imply, however, that there is no role for the transferee within the decision-making process, and there is plenty of evidence that potential transferees are at least consulted to some extent about proposed moves, even if they are contractually obliged to accept the final decision whatever the outcome.

For example, in the National Land Agency survey, transferees were asked whether or not their views on the proposed destination of their most recent posting had been solicited in advance by their employers. Overall, 43.7% of the survey's sample of transferees reported that they had at least been consulted about the destination of the move - although there is no indication either of the extent of consultation or of how influential the transferee's wishes proved to be. Similar figures apply to most identifiable sub-groups amongst these transferees, although there were higher figures for scientific and

technical workers (56.9% consulted) and government employees (49.8%), whereas workers in finance, insurance and real estate were much less likely to have been consulted (37.5%), for reasons which remain obscure.

One of the Labour Ministry surveys discussed earlier (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1985, p. 18) reveals a clear if subtle relationship between company size and the extent of consultation over matters such as the destination of the move, and the type of work to be performed there, in the case of transfers which require a change of residence. 36.6% of all companies in the survey's sample consulted their employees about details of impending transfers to a level beyond the simple practicalities of the move or any severe hardship that might be caused, a proportion which varied little between small companies with 100-299 employees (36.7%) and large companies with 5,000 or more employees (40.0%). What was very marked, however, was the variation by company size in the proportion of companies which claimed to take into account the transferee's wishes "to some extent" versus those which claimed to offer an individual employee an effective veto over an unwanted transfer. Approximately equal proportions of the smallest companies in the sample fell into these two categories (18.7% and 18.0% respectively). As company size increased, however, so the greater was the proportion of companies which only took into account the transferee's wishes "to some extent", such that by the time the largest companies with 5,000 or more employees were reached, the relevant percentages were 37.8% and just 2.2% respectively.

The survey did not probe more deeply into the relationship between company size and degree of consultation, or indeed into the breadth and ultimate practical significance of the consultation process, but at least three factors may have a bearing on the issue. First, given that larger companies offer both higher wages and greater job security than their smaller brethren, it is reasonable to assume that they would seek to offset the loss of flexibility in managing the size of the workforce by assuming a greater say over the spatial allocation of their employees. Or, to put it another way, spatial instability is part of the price that workers in large organizations have to pay to secure the benefits of such employment. Second, smaller companies experience much greater difficulties than large companies in holding on to key personnel during periods of labour shortage, and this places more of an onus upon them to be considerate of their employee's wishes in matters such as interregional mobility. Third, evidence to be presented in Chapter 4 demonstrates that transferees in smaller companies can expect to be posted to new locations for longer periods than is the norm in large companies. Under these circumstances, it is reasonable that the employee in a smaller company should have more say when a transfer is proposed, since the proportion of his working life that is likely to be affected is much greater.

In addition to varying with the size of the company for which he works, the chances of an employee actually being consulted about the destination of a proposed transfer are linked to his status within the company's workforce. For example, in a survey undertaken amongst large employers in 1988 (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1988), 50% of responding companies said that the decision to transfer a manager to a new location was based entirely on the company's own needs and priorities, but only 32.5% of companies were equally strict with their ordinary, non-managerial employees. Conversely, only 10% of responding companies claimed to take the wishes of their managers into account as a matter of course when determining whether or not to transfer them, compared with 25.5% who did so for ordinary regular employees. A similar difference emerged when companies were asked whether or not they take the wishes of potential transferees into account in deciding where to send them: 78.3% of the respondents said that they always give priority to the company's own needs when it comes to selecting the locations to which managers are required to move, but only 60.9% claimed to apply the same principle to ordinary employees.

The same survey also provided some evidence that large companies do try to reduce the incidence of transfers amongst their older workers, for whom interregional mobility can present particular problems with regard to home ownership, education and other matters. This courtesy is more readily extended to ordinary regular employees however: managers tend to receive stricter treatment. Thus 64.8% of companies said that they make at least some effort to restrict transfer activity amongst ordinary workers between the ages of 45 and 55, but only 52.4% do so for managers. Similarly, while 47.7% of companies do their best not to transfer ordinary employees who are within two or three years of retirement, only 39.8% extend the same protection to managers.

Other evidence from a Labour Ministry survey (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1985, p. 17) suggests that there is a relationship between company size and the amount of formal warning given to employees of impending transfer. While 59.1% of companies with 100-299 employees claim to give their transferees at least fifteen days warning of the move in those cases where a change of residence is likely to be involved, for companies with 5,000 or more employees the equivalent figure is just 24.5%. Conversely, while only 9.3% of the smallest companies give seven days warning or less of a transfer, fully 40% of the largest companies claimed to give as little warning as this. These figures are to some extent misleading, in that they refer to the official period of notice given to the transferee: in practice, supervisors and colleagues may well be able to flag impending moves much further in advance. There is no reason to believe, however, that informal sources of information are more active in large companies, and hence from the evidence available it is fair to conclude that once again, employees in large companies are called

upon to make greater sacrifices in terms of personal convenience than those who work for small ones.

This does not mean, however, that employees in large companies necessarily offer more resistance to proposed transfers. Evidence from the same survey (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1985, p. 35) suggests that although large companies make greater claims upon their employees, their employees are in turn far more responsive to the employer's needs than workers in smaller companies. Table 3.9 shows that while hardly any white-collar employees in companies of any size claim to positively welcome the idea of a transfer (*tenkin*), the proportion who are reasonably indifferent to being moved rises substantially with increasing company size, while the proportion who definitely do not want to be transferred, (as opposed to preferring not to be transferred, or being willing to accept a transfer only to a prescribed region), is highest in small companies.

Table 3.9 Attitudes towards transfers (*tenkin*) amongst male white-collar workers, Japan, 1984-85

Unit: % of Workers in each Company Size or Age Group

	"I wouldn't particularly mind if I was transferred"	"I definitely don't want to be transferred"	All other opinions/ don't know
Company size (employees)			
5,000 or more	27.1	20.4	52.5
1,000 - 4,999	15.5	27.7	56.8
300 - 999	11.2	38.0	50.8
below 300	10.7	40.9	48.4
Age (years)			
30 - 39	17.9	26.5	55.6
40 - 49	13.8	31.8	54.4
50 - 59	8.8	46.4	44.8
60 and above	6.7	66.4	26.9
TOTAL	14.5	32.8	52.7

Note: Other opinions include "I'd like to be transferred" (selected by less than 1% of respondents in total), "It depends on where I would be sent" (15.0%), and "If possible, I'd rather not be transferred" (32.6%).
Source: Recalculated from Figure 7 in Rôdô Daijin Kanbô (1985), p. 35.

The unpopularity of transfers seems to be less a function of company size than of age. Table 3.9 demonstrates that while only around a quarter of white-collar employees in their thirties definitely do not want to be transferred, the proportion rises progressively through subsequent age groups, and reaches two-thirds amongst employees in their

sixties. Conversely, employees who are quite indifferent to being transferred are relatively less common amongst older age groups.

Table 3.10 Problems and anxieties experienced by male white-collar transferees by age, Japan, 1984-85

Unit: % of transferees in each age group

	30-39	40-49	50-59	TOTAL
Problems over the childrens' education	24.6	44.7	56.1	39.5
Inadequate advanced warning of the transfer	29.6	17.1	15.9	21.1
No suitable accommodation at the destination	18.8	17.1	14.2	17.2
High moving expenses	17.2	13.1	10.4	13.8
Problems arranging for the home we own to be looked after during our absence	7.4	16.8	17.0	13.2
Couldn't get used to the weather/culture/life-style at the destination	13.8	11.4	8.7	11.6
Health problems in the family	11.3	11.9	10.7	11.4
Problems in disposing of the home we previously owned	4.6	6.3	6.6	5.7
My wife couldn't find a new job	4.1	5.0	4.8	4.7
Other	5.0	5.2	3.8	4.8
No problems experienced	25.4	18.0	14.2	19.9

Note: Up to three answers were permitted per respondent.

Source: Simplified from Table II-9 in Rôdô Daijin Kanbô (1985), p. 33.

The survey also sheds considerable light on the main reasons for employee resistance to transfers. Table 3.10 shows the rates of response of employees in different age groups to a schedule of problems suggested in the survey instrument, with multiple answers permitted. Overall, the greatest single problem facing transferees is disruption to the education of their children. As we shall see in Chapter 8, this is also a major reason why many employees choose to live apart from their families (*tanshin funin*) rather than take them along. While the education problem affects all age groups, its impact is particularly acute for older transferees whose children are approaching the critical graduation ages: hence the fact that over half of transferees in their fifties express this concern. For younger workers, a more pressing problem is the lack of warning in advance of impending transfers. Concern over this aspect decreases sharply with age - perhaps because more senior employees, with greater status and influence, are more likely to be treated with respect and consideration, although there is an alternative

explanation: perhaps older workers, raised under military discipline or in the austerity of the early postwar years, are simply conditioned - or at least more willing - to tolerate peremptory instructions from their employers.

Other sources of difficulty include the absence of adequate accommodation at the destination of the transfer, a problem which seems to affect all age groups to about the same extent, and worries over the financial cost of the move, although this again decreases sharply with age. Concern over the cost of the move can certainly be justified. According to one recent survey, the cost to the average transferee of relocating his family upon assuming a new post is around ¥500,000, but the average disturbance allowance paid at the time of the move is only ¥350,000: the balance of ¥150,000 has to be met from the transferee's own resources (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1991b, p. 46).

In general, however, the remaining categories in Table 3.10 draw very weak responses, which suggests either that concern over transfers is narrowly focused, or that most people accept them in a spirit of resignation. In this respect, it is important to recognize that while transfers do cause difficulties for those affected, they are by no means the only problem facing white-collar workers. Indeed, the same survey from which Table 3.10 is drawn reveals that when given a wide choice of gripes about everyday life, only a tiny percentage of male white-collar workers (4.7%) choose personnel transfers (*tenkin* or *haichi tenkan*) as one of their top three concerns: worries over health (cited by 36.5% of respondents), inadequate incomes (31.5%) and the education problem (29.2%) are perceived to be far more important.

One other reason why transfers do not rank highly as a source of concern remains to be discussed - and may be the most important of all. Since transfers are arranged by the employer and for the employer's benefit, it is reasonable that the employer should also shoulder most of the burden of the move, including removal expenses, the cost of seeking accommodation, disturbance and the like. Most Japanese employers do indeed provide substantial assistance to their mobile employees, particularly with regard to housing. This is such a large and important topic, and the Japanese solution is so distinctive, that we have set aside a separate chapter (Chapter 7) to deal with it more fully.

3.6 Summary of Chapter 3

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that while all sorts of people may find themselves subject to an interregional transfer at some point, ranging from the aspiring young finance manager to the redundant blast furnace operative, on average interregional transferees share a number of personal characteristics which set them apart from other migrants. First, they are mostly men: in many cases, women need not bother to apply.

Second, they are of working age - any working age - beyond the teens, a fact which may hardly seem a distinctive characteristic in the context of the workforce as a whole, but which certainly is distinctive relative to other groups of labour migrants, which tend to be much younger. To put it another way, by the time they are in their late 40s and 50s, Japanese workers are unlikely to move for any reason other than at their employers' behest. Third, transferees are generally well educated, especially in relation to their peers. Fourth, most transferees hold down white-collar jobs, in large companies (especially in the financial sector) or central government departments, and are engaged either in managing the organization which employs them or in supplying specialist advice or scientific expertise. And fifth, because of their age, many transferees are also family men - although as we shall see in Chapter 8, some of them spend rather less time with their families than they would like.

The stereotype of the company man, the "spiralist", the career-oriented manager or professional emerges quite clearly, and accords well with the expectations raised by the theoretical discussion in Chapter 2. Nevertheless, it is worth repeating the point: all sorts of people may find themselves subject to an interregional transfer. There is another way of looking at the data presented in this chapter, not for the distinctive characteristics they reveal, but for the range of ages, occupations, educational backgrounds and family circumstances which remain consistent with transfer activity. From this perspective, it is important to point out that a high proportion of transferees in Japan do not conform completely to a narrow stereotype, other than being male and blessed by inclusion within the "lifetime employment system". Indeed, it is the system which creates the need for transfers in the first place, and the fact that representatives from so many different groups can find themselves transferred attests to the wide diffusion across the Japanese economy of the system itself.

Nor are transferees necessarily at the total mercy of their employers when it comes to determining who will move and when: a substantial minority are consulted about proposed transfers in advance. Transfers can lead to a variety of problems for the individuals concerned, particularly through the disruption caused to the education of the transferee's children. Nevertheless, in comparison with issues such as health and salaries, transfers are a comparatively minor source of anxiety for most Japanese employees.

Chapter 4 Personnel Transfers in Time and Space

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the focus of our attention lay in the characteristics of the individual transferee and of the organization for which he works. In this chapter we move to a higher level of aggregation, and examine the regularities that emerge in patterns of transfer activity across the dimensions of time and space. We begin with temporal rhythms and trends: seasonal changes across the year, the length of individual postings, correlations with economic cycles and, in the first section, long term trends in the incidence of transfers. This discussion serves as a prelude to the most important theme to be examined in this thesis - the spatial characteristics of transfer activity. We have already established in Chapter 2 that geographical mobility within internal labour markets is usually a contingent event, the incidental outcome of decisions that serve other purposes. Nevertheless, on occasion by intent, but more generally through the effects of structural constraints, transfers are likely to display geographical regularities, and evidence will be produced to show that such regularities do indeed exist, particularly with respect to settlement size, but also in relation to distance, by region, and at different spatial scales.

Data on temporal trends and, in particular, on spatial patterns of transfer activity are not easy to obtain. Some useful insights can be culled from the National Land Agency and Tōkyō Metropolitan Government surveys which were introduced in earlier chapters, from a number of Labour Ministry surveys from which time series can be constructed, and from the Housing Survey. Beyond these sources, however, and at a more detailed geographical scale, one must rely upon surveys conducted by prefectural and municipal authorities. Many local authorities publish regular migration reports, which are normally based upon Basic Residents Register tabulations, and thus give no indication as to the causes of migration. A small number of authorities go beyond this, however, and conduct periodic surveys which do identify causes, and of these, some (like the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government surveys) include transfers (*tenkin*) as a separate category. In 1990 the author conducted a detailed examination of local authority migration reports in Japan, and identified three prefectures for which good published records exist (Shimane and Yamaguchi in western Hōnshū and Yamanashi, to the west of Tōkyō), as well as one other municipality - the City of Kōbe. This examination, together with the results of an earlier documentary search conducted at the Institute of Population Problems in 1979 and subsequent correspondence with Japanese scholars, suggests that few if any comparable sources exist, which is unfortunate, because these can hardly be considered a representative cross-section of Japanese local authorities. Nevertheless, it will be seen that even in their fragmentary state, these sources give clear and important insights into the spatial structure of migration flows generated by internal labour market activity in

Japan and, it should be noted, they contain a quality of local area data which, as far as the author can ascertain, is unmatched anywhere else in the industrial world.

In the previous chapter, the approach adopted was essentially straightforward and descriptive, a luxury permitted by the use of national aggregates and comprehensive surveys. The reader should be forewarned that in this chapter, and especially in the treatment of spatial patterns, the argument must of necessity be tighter and more closely reasoned, if the maximum value is to be obtained from more limited sources. In addition, closer reasoning is dictated by the need to avoid fallacious generalizations based upon arbitrary spatial and temporal aggregates rather than individuals and organizations. Inevitably, the contents of this chapter are also more speculative, and new questions emerge that will only be answered through subsequent research, a topic to be explored in Chapter 9.

4.2 Transfers in time: temporal characteristics of interregional transfers

4.2.1 Secular trends in transfer activity

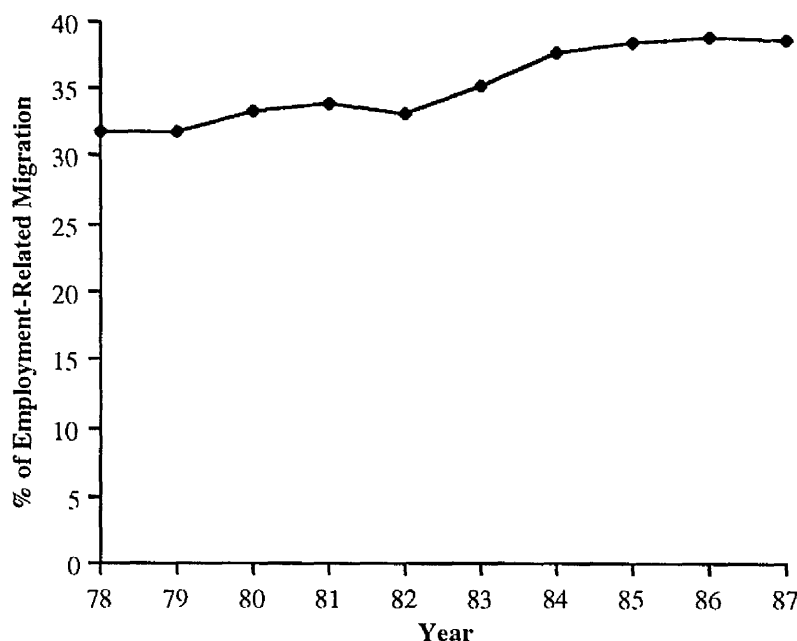
In Chapter 1 (Table 1.2) we saw convincing evidence from the Tōkyō surveys that interregional transfers increased substantially relative to other forms of migration between 1976 and 1986, and that this relative increase was based not on absolute growth - the number of transfers actually fell by 3.6% over the decade - but upon a general fall in the amount of migration taking place for other reasons. We shall also see later on in Section 4.3.3 that transfers have increased in relative importance over time in exchanges of population between Tōkyō and each of the major regions of Japan considered separately. But what other evidence is there that transfer activity has increased over time, whether in relative or absolute terms?

Some of the best temporal data at the local level come from the City of Kōbe, which is located on the western margin of the Keihanshin Metropolitan Region west of Ōsaka, and from Shimane and Yamaguchi Prefectures. According to a survey of residential migration in and out of Kōbe undertaken in 1977 (Kōbe-shi, 1979), 27.3% of all "cases" of migration (i.e. counting household heads only) between Kōbe and the rest of Japan beyond the Kinki district were accounted for by transfers (*tenkin*), and 49.9% of cases of employment-related migration could be attributed to the same cause. The survey was repeated nine years later in 1986 (Kōbe-shi, 1988), by which time transfers were found to account for 32.9% of all cases of residential migration between Kōbe and areas of Japan outside the Kinki district, and for 58.2% of employment-related migration. As in the Tōkyō surveys, however, these results were derived not from an absolute increase in

the incidence of transfers - they fell by 1.9% over the decade, from 8,420 cases to 8,260 - but by an even sharper drop in migration undertaken for other reasons.

Similar results hold true for Yamaguchi Prefecture (Yamaguchi-ken, 1978 and 1988). In 1977, transfers (*tenkin*) accounted for 17.4% of all residential migration between Yamaguchi and other prefectures, and for 48.5% of all employment-related migration. (The figure for all residential migration is so low because dependants were accounted under as a separate category in these surveys). By 1987, transfers accounted for 20.6% of all interprefectural residential migration, and for 55.0% of employment-related migration. While part of this increase can be attributed to a small rise in the number of transfers (by 6.3%, from around 16,250 to 17,250), most of it is again due to an even sharper drop in migration undertaken for other reasons.

Figure 4.1 Personnel transfers (*tenkin*) as a percentage of all employment-related interprefectural migration, Shimane Prefecture, 1978-87



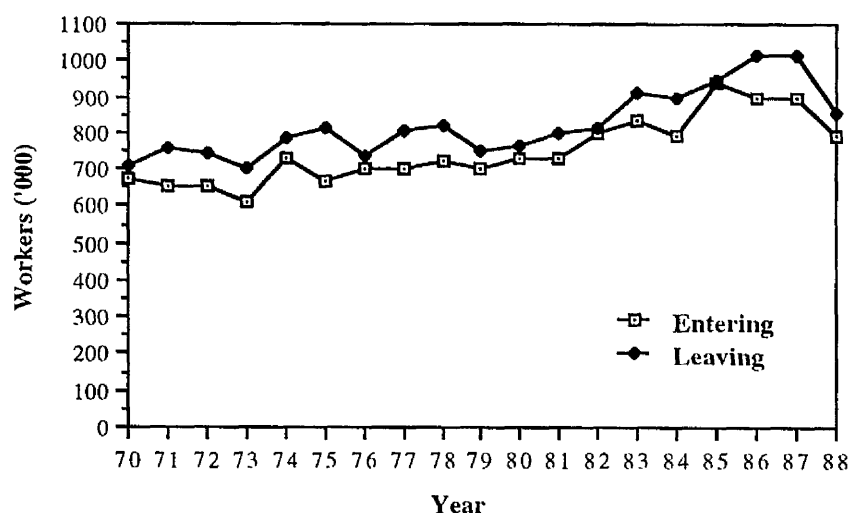
Note: Data are for enterprises with 5 or more regular workers. Employment-related migration includes migration attributable to transfers, to entering employment and to changing jobs.
Source: Shimane-ken (various years), Table 4.

Further, if less dramatic evidence comes from adjacent Shimane Prefecture (Shimane-ken, various years), for which the author was successful in obtaining a continuous series of annual reports for the entire period 1978-87 based on survey methods very similar to those employed in Yamaguchi (Figure 4.1). In 1978, transfers (*tenkin*) accounted for 11.7% of all residential migration between Shimane and other prefectures, and for 31.8% of all employment-related migration. By 1987, transfers accounted for 15.0% of all interprefectural residential migration, and for 38.6% of

employment-related migration. Once again, while part of this fairly modest increase can be attributed to a small rise in the number of transfers, most of it is due to a sharp drop in migration for other reasons. Figure 4.1 also reveals that the increase over time has been fairly regular, and it provides only the barest of evidence in support of the kinds of cyclical behaviour to be described in the next section.

It must be said that all of these sources are limited in scope, whether geographically (being for small areas and small migration streams) or because they are based upon infrequent surveys. Ideally, we would wish to have data on the national scale and in a continuous series. Annual data are published by the Labour Ministry, in its Survey of Employment Trends, but unfortunately these refer only to "transfers within the same company" (*dôitsu kigyônai idô*), and make no distinction between transfers linking adjacent factories and those which take people from one end of Japan to the other. Nevertheless, these data are useful, if not in absolute terms, then at least for what they can tell us about general trends over time.

Figure 4.2 Transfers within the same company, Japan, 1970-88



Note: Data are for companies with 5 or more regular employees. "Entering" means entering a new job; "Leaving" means leaving an old job.

Source: Rôdôshô, Koyô Dôkô Chôsa (Survey of Employment Trends), various years, as reported in Sômuchô, Nippon Tôkei Nenkan (Japan Statistical Yearbook), various years and tables.

Figure 4.2 records the annual totals of such transfers for the 1970-88 period. Two series are shown, one for persons entering a new job as a result of a transfer, and one for persons leaving a job for the same reason, with recorded departures regularly exceeding recorded entries, due in part to the inclusion in the statistics of persons taking or returning from unpaid leave of absence. This source of error need not greatly concern us in the present context, because the series are closely correlated (Pearson's $r = 0.91$). The real

point to be made is that both series display a clear (if gradual) secular increase, averaging around 14,000 workers per annum.

Unfortunately, there is no way of telling how much of this increase can be attributed to job rotation, how much to permanent transfers (although in recent survey reports *haichi tenkan* has been used to describe all cases of "transfers within the same company"), how much to loans to other branches, and how much to other forms of internal mobility. In addition, while the information required to isolate those transfers which also involve a change of residence has always been collected, little of this appears to have been published. There are some notable exceptions: the 1985 survey, for example, reported that of around 940,000 employees transferred between establishments within the same company, 110,000 (or 12%) had also changed their place of residence (Shokugyô Antei Kôhô, 1987), and information extracted from one of the most recent surveys, for the first half of 1990, suggests that most of this residential mobility takes place within the largest companies. Thus, of around 560,000 transfers which took place between establishments within the same company during the period January - June 1990, 250,000 occurred in companies with 1,000 or more employees, and of these 250,000 moves, 102,000 (or 41%) required a simultaneous change of residence (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1991a, p. 48).

While this figure provides useful support for earlier findings, however, particularly in relation to Table 3.3 in the previous chapter, neither it nor other glimpses from the survey provide an adequate substitute for the ideal, which would be a complete breakdown of the flows shown in Figure 4.2 according to whether or not residential mobility also took place. It is impossible to say, therefore, what the annual increase in migration associated with these transfers has been, in relation to the average increase of 14,000 per annum in all transfers.

4.2.2 Cyclical trends in transfer activity

There is another observation to be made about Figure 4.2, however. The secular increase in transfers of all kinds is masked by marked fluctuations from year to year. While increases average 14,000 per annum, the standard deviations of the residuals about the two series are both between three and four times as much. What then is distinctive about those years in which transfer activity is heightened and those in which it is depressed?

An obvious candidate for the role of explanatory variable is the health of the national economy, but it is not clear *a priori* whether the expected relationship should be positive or negative, and to what extent it may be lagged. In favour of a positive relationship is the idea that faster growth implies expansion in business activity and an enhanced need to

redeploy labour; counting against is the contrary idea, that it is recession and associated cost pressures which force businesses to think more carefully of how best to use their workers. Besides, the creation of new jobs and the redeployment of redundant labour both take time, so that the response to a particular crisis may well take effect long after the crisis has passed, a classic example of this being the redeployment of labour which took place in the steel industry in the late 1980s, and which is discussed in Chapter 6. Moreover, there is no reason why all transfers should conform to the same temporal rhythm. While companies may find it comparatively easy to implement short-term adjustments in the blue-collar work force for example, changes in the level of administrative support may take more time to organize, and could also be disguised by measures such as the channelling of surplus personnel into sales activity. Nor should we ignore the fact that many transferees are employed in the public sector. Their mobility is controlled by policies on public sector spending, policies which are influenced by many considerations other than fluctuations in general economic activity, and which can include a deliberate anti-cyclical component.

A proper explanation of the cyclical patterns in transfer activity would therefore require lengthy and detailed study in order to overcome these various ambiguities, a project which lies well beyond both the means and the purpose of the present thesis. For what it is worth, however, there does appear to be a positive correlation between economic growth and (unlagged) transfer activity, until the mid-1980s at least, as revealed by the downturns in both transfer series in sympathy with the oil crises of 1973 and 1979. The biggest downturn of all, however, was between 1987 and 1988, when much of the Japanese economy had returned to growth, so obviously any relationship between these variables must be far from simple.

It would be inappropriate to leave this subject, however, without first elaborating the problem facing employers in times of recession a little further, since this has an important bearing upon the relationship between transfers and structural change that will be explored through the case study to be presented in Chapter 6. In Chapter 2.4 we noted that employers have a variety of means at their disposal to control labour costs during recessionary times, and while some of these means impact elsewhere than upon the tenured workforce, such as the dismissal of temporary workers, others do affect the way in which the "lifetime employment system" operates in practice, and of these, some are clearly manifested in geographical mobility. Some of these measures can be applied to both the white-collar and blue-collar components of the workforce: most, however, are usually applied either disproportionately or exclusively to the latter.

One option is simply to reduce the number of workhours, by shortening the working week, reducing overtime or laying off workers for certain periods. Another is to lower

the wage rate, either by reducing the rate per hour or cutting the biennial bonus payment. Neither of these options is likely to stimulate much increase in labour mobility, though by increasing the gap in working conditions between companies both will add an extra inducement to spontaneous job-changing.

A third option is to suspend the hiring of new recruits. This has some disadvantages; it will introduce irregularities into the age distribution of the workforce, for example, which has implications for the supply of suitable internal candidates for promotion to senior positions later on. For this and other reasons, employers may prefer the fourth option; "early retirement" of older workers, which will tend to reduce the average age of employees and thus cut the per capita wage bill, while creating a new range of opportunities for advancement for more junior staff, at the cost, of course, of the loss of experience implied by the shedding of older personnel. Allied to this option is a fifth, "voluntary redundancy", which is perhaps the most desirable option from the company's point of view, since it can choose from amongst the applicants for redundancy and weed out the less able of any age; indeed, steps could be taken to "encourage" the less able to apply in the first place.

These last three of these options will have rather more of an effect on labour mobility, not just between the company and the outside world, as former employees drift away to other jobs in other places, or youngsters who might have been hired locally are forced to look elsewhere, but also within the company, as the remaining workforce is reshuffled to fill the gaps left by those departing - or failing to arrive in the case of suspended recruitment.

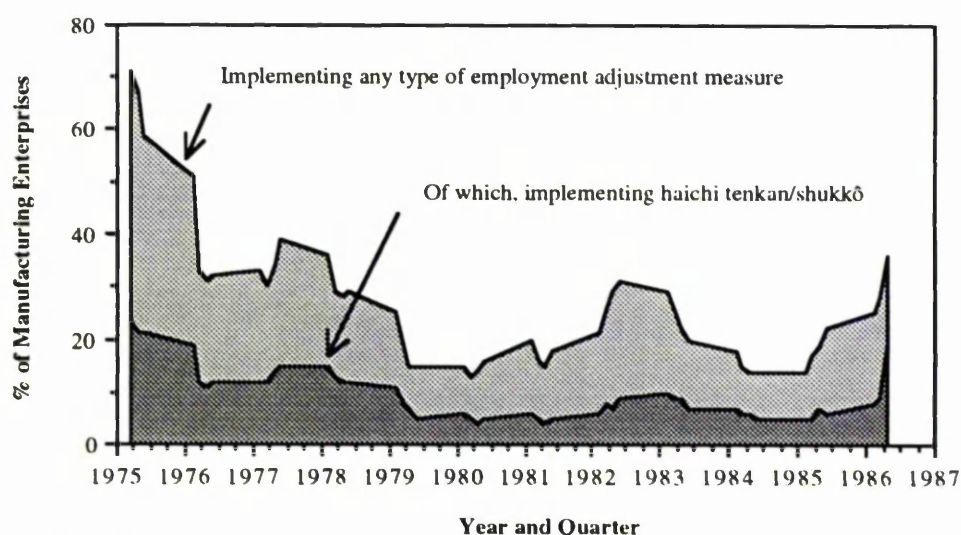
Beyond these possibilities, however, lie various types of personnel transfers: inter-branch loans to the sales division to assist in drumming up new markets, permanent transfers accompanying the closure of high cost facilities, inter-company loans, temporary outplacements, even permanent outplacements, whether to existing firms in more prosperous sectors who genuinely need the labour, or to existing subcontractors who are in no position to refuse the imposition of a few surplus bodies, or even to subsidiaries deliberately set up to absorb the overspill: we shall see examples of each in Chapter 6.

The point to be made here, however, is that these mobility responses will only be resorted to if, from the employer's point of view, they offer advantages over other items on the menu of employment adjustment options.

So what do Japanese employers actually do, when confronted with the need to trim labour costs in the face of recession? Evidence regarding the precise extent to which the

various means open to companies to rationalize and reapportion their workforces are actually implemented has been available for the manufacturing sector since 1975, when the deep recession caused by the first oil shock first focused widespread attention upon the issue. Figure 4.3 shows the trend over the 1975-86 period in the proportion of manufacturing enterprises included in the Labour Ministry's quarterly Survey of Labour Market Trends which undertook some form of employment adjustment measure in the quarter indicated (comparable data are not available for subsequent years). The graph demonstrates that there have been considerable fluctuations over time in the proportion of enterprises implementing employment adjustment measures, from a maximum of over 70% of manufacturing enterprises at the depth of the recession which followed the first oil shock, to lows close to 10% in parts of the early and mid-1980s. Figure 4.3 also reveals that transfers of either the *haichi tenkan* or *shukko* varieties have tended to fluctuate in absolute importance more or less in line with the aggregate trend: the proportion of companies implementing adjustment measures which have included transfers has consistently represented between a quarter and a half of the total.

Figure 4.3 Implementation of employment adjustment measures by manufacturing enterprises, Japan, 1975-86



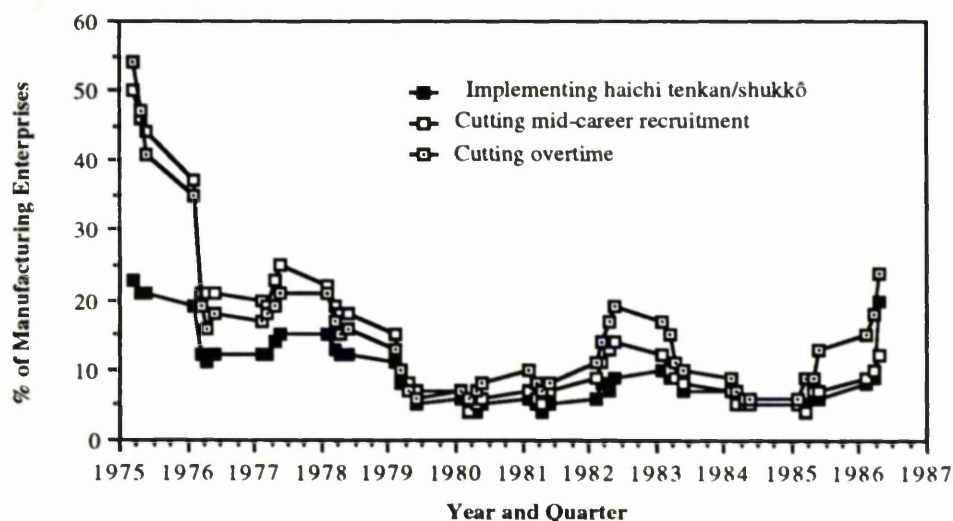
Source: Calculated from data in Rôdô Daijin Kanbô (1987a), p. 242.

Of the various measures available to employers seeking to adjust their labour forces, the most widely adopted have been cuts in overtime, transfers, and cuts in mid-career recruitment: indeed, these three have remained the most popular options throughout the period since 1975, far outdistancing other possibilities such as reductions in the working week. Figure 4.4 shows trends over time in the proportion of manufacturing enterprises implementing these three major forms of employment adjustment. Figure 4.4 (a), like Figure 4.3, suggests that the use of all three has tended to fluctuate in accordance with

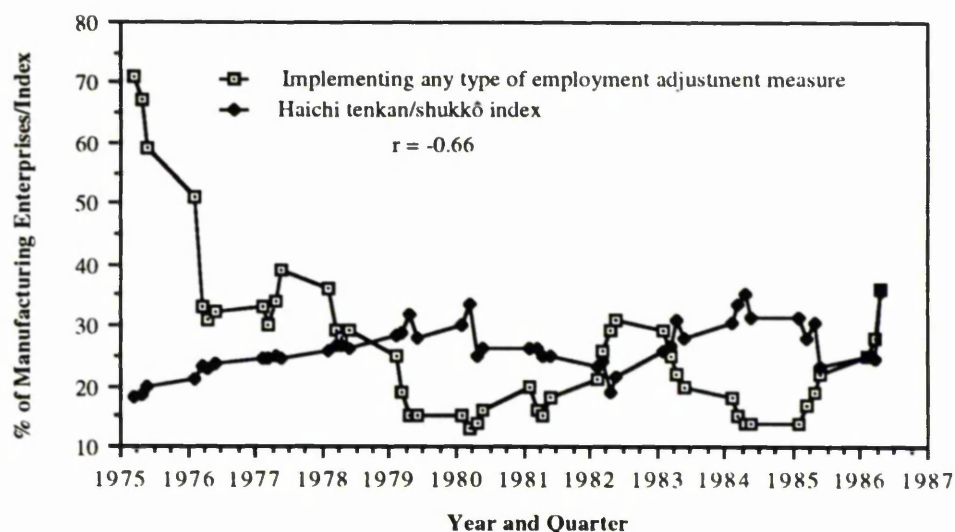
economic conditions, but they have not fluctuated to the same extent, for cuts in both overtime and mid-career recruitment are far more responsive to changing conditions than are transfers.

Figure 4.4 Implementation of the three main employment adjustment measures by manufacturing enterprises, Japan, 1975-86

4.4 (a) Implementation of the three main employment adjustment measures



4.4 (b) Implementation of *haichi tenkan/shukkō*



Note: The "haichi tenkan/shukkō index" (expressed as a percentage) is here defined as the number of enterprises implementing haichi tenkan and/or shukkō, divided by the number of enterprises implementing haichi tenkan and/or shukkō plus the number of enterprises cutting mid-career recruitment plus the number of enterprises cutting overtime. It is possible, therefore, for the same enterprise to be counted up to three times in the denominator. An index of 100% indicates that of the three major measures only one, haichi tenkan and/or shukkō, has actually been implemented, and the higher the index, the more important are transfers relative to the other two major forms of adjustment as observed at the level of the individual enterprise. The index says nothing about the actual numbers of employees involved.

Source: Calculated from data in Rôdô Daijin Kanbô (1987a), p. 242.

Figure 4.4 (b) shows quite clearly that there is a negative relationship between what we have here termed the "haichi tenkan/shukkkô index", which defines the relative importance of transfers as one of the three major forms of employment adjustment, and the proportion of all enterprises undertaking adjustments of any type (Pearson's $r = -0.66$). In other words, during periods when companies are anxious to adjust their labour supply the absolute incidence of transfers tends to increase, but transfers become less important in relative terms as a source of employment adjustment.

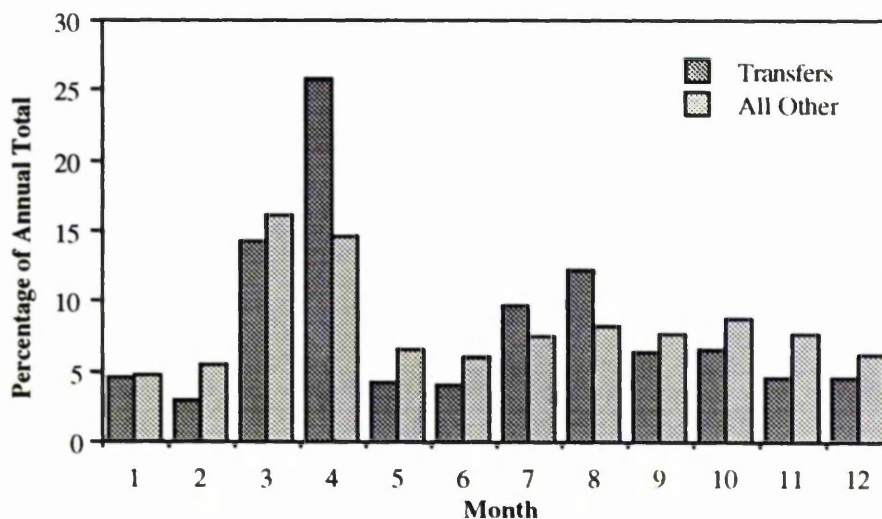
The reason for this may lie in the fact that in a crisis it is far easier to impose bans on overtime, or to suspend mid-career hirings, than to expand the scale at which personnel transfers are undertaken. Mid-career hirings in particular affect people who are not at yet employees of the company, and towards whom the company has no obligations. Transfers, on the other hand, require time: time to identify openings elsewhere in the company, or to negotiate positions with subsidiaries, time to consult with the unions, time to arrange accommodation, transportation and other elements. Transfers, therefore, may be characterized as a medium term response to a short term crisis which may itself be the manifestation of a longer term problem.

In more recent years, many large Japanese companies have sought to diversify out of declining sectors of activity, and thereby avoid both secular difficulties and the cyclical problems discussed in this section. A detailed example of this behaviour will be discussed later on, in Chapter 6. A survey of large companies (with 1,000 or more employees) conducted in 1988, however, shows that of those firms which at that time confronted the need to reduce staff numbers in declining sectors of activity, 81.7% did so in part by transferring staff permanently (*haichi tenkan*) to other divisions, and 28.0% arranged for permanent outplacements (*shukkkô tenseki*) to subsidiaries. Conversely, as companies sought to diversify into more promising areas of activity, either by setting up new or restructured divisions or by spinning off new subsidiaries, most made use of internal transfers or outplacements as a means of obtaining the labour required. Thus 77.3% of companies which set up new or restructured divisions in growth fields transferred staff in from other divisions, while 89.5% of firms setting up new subsidiaries made use of permanent outplacements. Other methods were also used, such as mid-career hiring, the hiring of new graduates and so forth, and 15.1% of companies setting up new or restructured divisions obtained labour through outplacement from existing subsidiaries, as did 18.1% of companies which set up new subsidiaries (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1989, pp. 50-51). How much of this transfer activity resulted in residential mobility, however, it is impossible to say.

4.2.3 Seasonal trends in transfer activity

At a much finer temporal scale, there are marked fluctuations between the months of the year in the extent to which employing organizations implement personnel transfers, and more especially transfers of the job rotation type (or *tenkin* in the narrow sense). This is to be expected, given the need for careful coordination not just between one transfer and another, but also with other elements of personnel policy, particularly the induction of new graduates entering the labour force each spring, as well as broader corporate variables such as the fiscal year, which for most companies begins on April 1.

Figure 4.5 Distribution of transfers and all other forms of interregional migration by month, Japan, 1981-82



Note: "All Other" migration excludes transfers.

Source: Calculated from data in Kokudochô (1982), p. 39.

The pattern shown in Figure 4.5 is typical. Although interregional transfers do occur at all times of the year, there are two obvious seasonal peaks, the larger one by far in the early spring (March, and especially April), and a smaller one in July and August. The spring peak corresponds with the end of the school and university year and the entry of new graduates into the workforce: hence the peak observed in the non-transfer flows as well. In effect, the entry of new employees sets the timetable for personnel changes throughout any large organization, as promotions propel staff upwards to make way for the newcomers, and those at the very top of the seniority ladder are pushed off into retirement. The summer transfer season, meanwhile, tends to be one of adjustment and repositioning at the higher levels of management, and is correlated with school summer holidays (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1988, p. 4). April alone accounts for just over one quarter of the entire year's transfers, and April and March together for almost exactly

40% of the total. Adding in August, the only other month in which the percentage share reaches double figures, we find that no less than 57% of all migration associated with personnel transfers occurs in just three months, while those same months account for only 39% of all other forms of migration.

The evidence presented in Figure 4.5 comes from the National Land Agency survey, but is matched almost precisely by that presented in other sources, including the Tôkyô Metropolitan Government surveys, which also show that seasonal shares have remained remarkably constant. Further evidence at the company level comes from a Ministry of Labour survey (*Rôdô Daijin Kanbô*, 1985), which reveals that although 43.3 percent of companies do not confine their transfers of white-collar staff to any particular period within the calendar year, 31.0% of all companies, and 54.7% of companies who do transfer staff at regular points in the year, do so in March or April, percentages nearly three times higher than those for the next busiest period, July and August. The correlation between these figures and those derived from the National Land Agency survey is extremely high (Pearson's $r = 0.93$).

These figures are of more than passing interest, because of the warning they contain against blindly accepting figures on personnel transfers based upon surveys which have lasted for less than a full calendar year. It should be clear from Figure 4.5 that a survey undertaken in February will not only grossly underrepresent the annual flow of transferees, but also underestimate their importance relative to other migrants, while exactly the opposite will be the case with a survey undertaken in April alone. The problem is not only quantitative; there are also likely to be substantial qualitative differences as well between data on the characteristics of transferees collected in April, and dominated by job rotations, and "similar" data collected in, say, February, when rotations are scarce.

4.2.4 The duration of transfers

The final temporal dimension of transfer activity is one on which surprisingly little information has been published at the national scale, although there is plenty of information available for individual companies, and more will be generated in Chapter 5. This is the period of time over which each posting lasts, or to put it another way, the interval between one transfer and the next. The best evidence comes once again from a Labour Ministry survey (*Rôdô Daijin Kanbô*, 1985), which reveals that some 55.5% of companies which rotate staff on a regular basis normally move people every three or four years, and another 35.5% use five or more years or the norm. Table 4.1 suggests, however, that short duration transfers are somewhat more common in large companies than in small ones, or to put it another way, that employees in large companies experience

more mobility during their working lives than those in small companies, a finding which confirms results described earlier in Chapter 3.3.

Table 4.1 Average length of job rotation (*tenkin*) postings in companies with a system of regular transfers, Japan, 1984-85

Unit: % of companies

	Normal duration of posting		
	1-2.9 Years	3 - 4.9 years	5 or more years
Company size (employees)			
5000 or more	5.0	70.0	25.0
1000 - 4999	6.7	64.4	28.9
300 - 999	12.4	51.8	35.8
100 - 299	8.8	44.7	46.5
All companies	9.0	55.5	35.5

Note: Figures have been recalculated to exclude companies which reported no fixed period.

Source: Rôdô Daijin Kanbô (1985), p. 17.

4.3 Transfers in space: geographical characteristics of interregional transfers

Having completed our exploration of the temporal dimension, it is now time to examine what are in the context of this thesis the most important manifestations of transfer activity: those which reveal themselves as patterns in geographical space.

We begin at an obvious point, with the relationship between transfers and settlement size. It would be very surprising indeed not to find a relationship between these two variables, since the types of employment and places of work between which transfers most commonly take place are heavily concentrated in urban areas. We then examine the linkage between transfers and two fundamental spatial variables, scale and distance, both to clarify the relationship between transfers and the scale at which the labour market is defined, and to see whether transfers are indeed more "frictionless" than other forms of migration. Finally, we adopt a more idiographic perspective, and explore the extent of any variations between Japan's various regions in the incidence of transfers, above and beyond the effect of interregional variations in the level of urbanization.

As was indicated in the introduction to this chapter, the data available with which to conduct this examination are both few and limited in quality. The discussion will therefore be more intricate and more speculative than has been the case so far in this

thesis. We will also examine data aggregated on the basis of spatial units which are, to a greater or lesser extent, of an arbitrary nature, and great care must therefore be taken to ensure that generalizations are avoided which are simply a function of the units employed, rather than a manifestation of real processes.

4.3.1 Transfers and settlement size

From the theoretical discussion in Chapter 2, and in the light of some of the findings in this chapter, we would certainly expect personnel transfers to occur more frequently between large urban centres than between either small cities or rural towns and villages, in response to differences in the underlying endowment of jobs in higher management and in key sectors such as government service and finance. At the same time, the geographical expression of hierarchical linkages within large organizations, such as those between headquarters operations and prefectural branches, should ensure a steady flow of staff rotations between various levels in the settlement hierarchy, and especially between adjacent levels.

Data with which to test these propositions are available from two sources: the National Land Agency survey (Kokudochô, 1982) to which much reference has already been made, and some of the regular surveys undertaken by prefectural governments, although most of the latter have been conducted in Japan's more rural and underdeveloped prefectures rather than in major centres of business and administration.

Geographical information from the National Land Agency survey has already been used once, in Table 1.1, to demonstrate that personnel transfers (*tenkin* plus *shukkô*) account for higher shares of migration to Japan's three metropolitan regions from the provinces beyond (29.5%), and of migration in the opposite direction (30.2%), than any other single cause of interregional mobility. Fortunately, the survey report also provides a very detailed breakdown of migration flows within and between various classes of settlement, defined by a combination of economic function and legal status, both of which are closely correlated with size. The classes used were as follows:

Three Metropolitan Regions: the Keihin, Chûkyô and Keihanshin Metropolitan Regions, centred on Tôkyô, Nagoya and Ôsaka respectively.

Five Major Provincial Cities: Sapporo, Sendai, Okayama, Hiroshima and Kitakyûshû/Fukuoka.

Other Prefectural Capitals: All prefectural capital cities other than those already listed among the five major provincial cities.

Smaller Provincial Cities: All provincial cities (*shi*, municipalities which usually have populations in excess of 30,000), other than those included elsewhere.

Towns and Villages (*chô* and *son*, municipalities which usually have populations below 30,000).

Table 4.2 records the shares of personnel transfers in migration streams within and between these settlement classes. The direction of flow has been ignored, because in most cases there is little difference between the figures for flows in and flows out, the main exception being in areas of chronic population loss, and especially rural towns and villages, for which transfers are naturally far more significant as a source of in-migrants than of out-migrants.

Table 4.2 Personnel transfers (*tenkin* and *shukkô*) as a component of all migration and employment-related migration by settlement size, Japan, 1980-81

Unit: %

		Personnel transfers as percentage of:	
		All migration	Employment-related migration
All migration		22.4	57.6
Between	And		
3 Metropolitan Regions	3 Metropolitan Regions	58.4	75.3
3 Metropolitan Regions	5 Major Provincial Cities	53.0	77.3
3 Metropolitan Regions	Other Prefectural Capitals	45.1	68.9
3 Metropolitan Regions	Smaller Provincial Cities	23.7	44.8
3 Metropolitan Regions	Towns and Villages	13.8	30.2
5 Major Provincial Cities/ Prefectural Capitals	Smaller Provincial Cities	42.7	73.8
5 Major Provincial Cities/ Prefectural Capitals	Towns and Villages	19.7	56.0
Smaller Provincial Cities	Smaller Provincial Cities	37.4	74.3
Smaller Provincial Cities	Towns and Villages	26.0	64.2
Towns and Villages	Towns and Villages	24.6	66.7
Return migration			
From	To		
3 Metropolitan Regions	Cities	16.0	35.2
3 Metropolitan Regions	Towns and Villages	5.1	13.3
3 Metropolitan Regions	Municipality of Birth	8.5	21.2

Source: Calculated from data in Kokudochô (1982), p. 230.

The results could hardly be clearer. The largest flows, whether measured against all forms of migration or as a component of employment-related migration alone, take place

among the three metropolitan regions and between those regions and the major provincial cities. Over half of all migration between these very large settlements - and over three quarters of employment-related migration - can be attributed to personnel transfers. The percentages then fall away with decreasing settlement size, until we reach migration between metropolitan regions and ordinary towns and villages, by which time transfers account for barely one eighth of all migration, and for less than one third of employment-related migration. The same gradient is repeated in flows between prefectural capitals, smaller provincial cities, and towns and villages. In short, the evidence strongly supports the notion of an urban bias in transfer activity.

Table 4.2 also reveals two other peculiarities however, one of which we shall explore in more detail in the next section, while the other has an important bearing upon the discussion of the "U-Turn" phenomenon with which this thesis began. As regards the former, note that although the largest flows are between the three metropolitan regions, the smallest flows are not between ordinary towns and villages, as one might suspect, but between settlements at the extremes of the size spectrum. This pattern is consistent with the existence of complex hierarchical linkages within large organizations which channel flows between adjacent levels in the settlement size spectrum, an issue to which we shall return in the case study presented in Chapter 5. There is an important areal dimension to such hierarchical structuring, which is expressed in the form of spatially nested labour markets. As a result, while transfers may be an unimportant component of flows between metropolitan regions and distant towns and villages, they may still be the dominant migration form at the local level.

With regard to the so-called "U-Turn" of population, Table 4.2 demonstrates an important paradox. In terms of the aggregate balance between dominant and reverse streams defined at the level of major regions, the context within which the term "population U-Turn" was originally coined by Kuroda, transfers are obviously the largest single source of migration. When it comes to return migration, however, the flow of native populations from metropolitan regions back to provincial cities, towns and villages, and in particular to the municipality of birth, transfers are relatively unimportant, and in the case of small towns and villages, almost an irrelevance. Given that return migration is the "U-Turn" phenomenon as popularly understood, however, the results serve to reinforce a cautionary note sounded by the author some years ago, to the effect that confusion over definitions has injected an unacceptable degree of ambiguity into Japanese population studies (Wiltshire, 1979a).

The data in Table 4.2 are drawn from only one study, but they do find confirmation in various other surveys undertaken by prefectural authorities in some of Japan's smaller prefectures, as shown in Table 4.3. In each case, the proportion of all employment-

related migration accounted for by personnel transfers decreases along with settlement size, although the proportion at any one level varies considerably between the three prefectures listed as well. Table 3.14 also provides a more detailed breakdown of smaller settlements than is given in the National Land Agency survey, and demonstrates that the relationship with settlement size continues right down to settlements with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants.

Table 4.3 Personnel transfers (*tenkin*) as a component of employment-related interprefectural migration by settlement size, Yamanashi, Shimane and Yamaguchi Prefectures, 1977 and 1987

Unit: % of employment-related migration

	Yamanashi 1977	Shimane 1987*	Yamaguchi 1977	Yamaguchi 1987
Settlement size (population)				
200,000 and above	na	na	61.0	62.3
100,000 - 199,999	45.5	64.1	55.2	59.7
30,000 - 99,999	27.5	49.0	41.7	48.0
10,000 - 29,999	25.5	40.2	34.5	42.9
below 10,000	23.9	35.8	16.3	28.5

Note: * Male primary migrants only.

Sources: Calculated from data in Yamanashi-ken (1978), Tables 5 and 6, Shimane-ken (1988), Table 6 and Yamaguchi-ken (1978, 1988), Table 8.

In addition, Table 4.3 shows how transfers have increased in relative importance over time in one of these prefectures, Yamaguchi, and for every size class, to match the gain in the prefecture as a whole. These increases become progressively more marked as we move down the size scale: for the one city with a population in excess of 200,000 (Shimonoseki), the gain is just 1.3 percentage points, but for settlements with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants the gain is 12.2 percentage points. It must be stressed, however, that the figures may have been influenced by changes in the volume of migration taking place for other reasons as much as by trends in transfer activity, and in practice this proves to have been the case. Between 1977 and 1987 there were small absolute gains in transfer activity for smaller settlements in Yamaguchi: of the order of 2% for settlements with 30,000-99,999 inhabitants, 9% for those with 10,000-29,999 inhabitants, and 11% for the very smallest settlements with populations below 10,000. Over the same period, however, migration for employment-related reasons other than personnel transfers collapsed: by 21%, 24% and 46% for these three classes of settlements respectively. More than for any other reason, therefore, small settlements have "caught up" as participants in interregional transfer systems simply because there is otherwise very little

reason why anyone would choose to live there, while those who would choose to leave of their own free will have mostly done so already.

4.3.2 Transfers, scale and distance

Let us return for a moment to Table 4.2. In the previous section, the pattern shown in the table was described as consistent with hierarchical structuring within large organizations which may also be defined in terms of spatially nested labour markets. Such markets, whether internal or external, may in turn mirror the nested service areas attached to each urban centre within the settlement hierarchy. One implication of this suggestion is that any particular place will be connected simultaneously to a number of different systems of personnel transfers operating at a variety of spatial scales, from the global or international scale, through the nation-wide or interregional scale, right down to the very local scale defined by the lowest level of administrative unit.

This has two important implications. First, it means that before we seek to establish the importance of transfers to a settlement as a mechanism for migration we should establish which transfer systems are actually operating there, and ensure that the scale at which we define our measures of migration are appropriate to those systems. And second, we should avoid drawing comprehensive conclusions from data collected at only one scale when a number of scales may actually be appropriate. In this thesis we shall not be concerned with the very widest scale, international movements of personnel within large organizations, although work on that particular subject is proposed in Chapter 9. It is important, however, to explore the effects of scale within Japan as a variable influencing our measurements of migration and transfer activity.

In Table 4.3, for example, "migration" has been defined by default as a change of residence across a prefectural boundary. One consequence of this definition is that while interprefectural transfers will have been captured, and thus mobility within internal labour markets operating at either a broad regional scale, or across Japan as a whole, no account has been taken of moves within each prefecture, in internal labour markets defined at the prefectural scale or at any lower level. Yet both government and commercial organizations operate at these local scales as well, and while smaller settlements in particular may be effectively detached from broader interregional transfer systems, this does not mean that transfers defined at a more local scale are not important to them: indeed, what evidence there is suggests that the very opposite is true.

For a demonstration of this point, consider Table 4.4, which shows data for Shimane and Yamaguchi on intraprefectural migration, as well as ratios of intraprefectural transfers to all transfer activity (intraprefectural and interprefectural), the latter to assist

comparison with Table 4.3. Three observations can be made. First, irrespective of settlement size, the proportion of intraprefectural migration accounted for by personnel transfers is higher than the equivalent figure for interprefectural migration. Second, although transfers are less important as a source of migration in smaller settlements than in large ones, the differences are far less marked for intraprefectural than for interprefectural migration. And third, as a direct consequence, while more than two-thirds of transfers in and out of the largest settlements are interprefectural, linking major local cities with centres of population, commerce and administration elsewhere in Japan, nearly two-thirds of transfers in and out of the smallest settlements are of a far more local variety.

Table 4.4 Personnel transfers (*tenkin*) as a component of employment-related intraprefectural migration, and intraprefectural transfers as a component of all transfer-related migration, by settlement size, Shimane and Yamaguchi Prefectures, 1977 and 1987

Unit: %

	Transfers as a percentage of intraprefectural employment-related migration			Intraprefectural transfers as a percentage of all transfer-related migration		
	Shimane 1987*	Yamaguchi 1977	Yamaguchi 1987	Shimane 1987*	Yamaguchi 1977	Yamaguchi 1987
Settlement size (population)						
200,000 and above	na	68.5	71.1	na	30.1	32.0
100,000 - 199,999	72.3	54.3	63.6	32.6	32.4	32.9
30,000 - 99,999	79.9	52.6	61.6	52.0	44.3	47.0
10,000 - 29,999	74.1	54.1	59.9	61.6	54.6	53.8
below 10,000	54.4	45.1	54.4	62.1	64.3	60.3

Note: * Male primary migrants only.

Sources: Calculated from data in Shimane-ken (1988), Table 6 and Yamaguchi-ken (1978, 1988), Table 8.

The third observation, which is based solely upon data for personnel transfers, constitutes strong evidence in favour of the nested labour markets hypothesis, and leads on to an important conclusion: that great care must indeed be taken when assessing the significance of personnel transfers to match the scale of the labour markets being analysed with the scale of the settlements concerned. This is a problem which has not otherwise been addressed in the literature, as far as the present author is aware.

The other two observations must be treated with more caution, however, because once again they can only be interpreted in the context of other causes of migration. As with interprefectural mobility, a preponderance of transfers may simply mean that there is

otherwise little reason why people would choose to live in some of these places, and particularly in the smaller settlements. And herein may lie the answer to another paradox. If it is true that transfers are comparatively frictionless, then presumably they should be relatively less important as a cause of migration for short distance moves, when distance has little opportunity to take its toll on other forms of mobility which are supposedly more sensitive to it, than they are for long distance moves. Yet the evidence of Table 4.4 suggests quite the opposite.

The answer may lie in the fact that distance is not a cause of migration: any effect it has is wholly negative. For large amounts of migration to occur (other than that linked to transfers) there must be differences between origins and destinations that make a move worthwhile. By Japanese standards, however, even the largest cities in these two prefectures are minor and relatively insignificant places, with little to commend them to the potential migrant in comparison with larger provincial cities nearby, like Fukuoka, Hiroshima and Okayama, and especially the great metropolitan regions beyond. In short, if an individual is going to migrate, it makes little sense to move only a short distance, when the gains to be enjoyed from a longer move are manifestly so much greater. If this logic is correct, then we would expect intraprefectural migration for reasons other than transfers to be depressed relative to interprefectural migration, and hence transfers to be relatively more important within each prefecture than beyond it - which is indeed the case.

By the same token, we would also expect to find variations in the importance of transfers relative to other forms of labour migration at the interprefectural scale, comparing one prefecture with another. When the interchange of population is between a comparatively backward prefecture like Yamaguchi or Shimane and one of the prefectures containing a large provincial city or a metropolitan centre, underlying differences in economic opportunities should ensure comparatively large flows for reasons other than transfers. Conversely, the highest ratios for transfers relative to other forms of migration should be for prefectures which share a similar rural or backward character, such that there is little reason otherwise to go there, and as far away as possible, to allow distance to have its maximum possible effect on other migration types.

Unfortunately, the Yamaguchi survey reports do not include information about prefectures or even broader districts of origin and destination by cause, but those for Shimane do. Table 4.5 records the shares of all employment-related migration between Shimane and other districts and prefectures, for 1978 and 1987, which can be attributed to personnel transfers. The pattern is complex, but some regularities do emerge, beyond the obvious fact that transfers have increased in relative importance in exchanges with every district or prefecture listed. Which areas listed are generally as rural and backward as Shimane? Obvious candidates include Hokkaidô/Tôhoku, Tottori, Yamaguchi,

Shikoku and Kyûshû. These five account for most of the highest figures in the table in both years. Conversely, which areas listed are most metropolitan in character? Again there are five leading candidates - Tôkyô, Aichi (Nagoya), Kyôto, Ôsaka and Hyôgo, which together account for all of the lowest figures in the table. The effect of underlying differences in the character of places is clearly of great importance.

Table 4.5 Personnel transfers (*tenkin*) as a component of employment-related interprefectural migration by districts and prefectures of origin/destination, Shimane Prefecture, 1978 and 1987

Unit: % of employment-related migration

	1978*	1987*
Hokkaidô/Tôhoku	56.4	68.5
Kantô		
Tôkyô	20.9	27.6
Other Kantô	31.9	38.2
Chûbu		
Aichi	19.5	19.0
Other Chûbu	28.2	42.8
Kinki		
Kyôto	14.2	23.6
Ôsaka	13.1	18.5
Hyôgo	19.0	28.1
Other Kinki	22.2	31.2
Chûgoku		
Tottori	64.0	62.5
Okayama	49.9	53.8
Hiroshima	40.3	42.5
Yamaguchi	37.8	59.7
Shikoku	47.6	56.9
Kyûshû	49.7	50.7

Note: * Male primary migrants only.

Sources: Calculated from data in Shimane-ken (1979, 1988), Table 5.

But what of the effect of distance per se? Amongst those places which are similar to Shimane, does distance have any obvious effect? To this question the answer appears to be no. The highest figures in both years are for the Hokkaidô/Tôhoku district and Tottori Prefecture - the most distant place in the table, combined with the most proximate. If distance has any effect it is more than swamped by the effect of the underlying similarities between these areas. This is not to say, of course, that distance has no effect: in 1987, for example, there were a total of 792 transfers between Shimane and Tottori, but only 139 between Shimane and the whole of Hokkaidô/Tôhoku, despite the fact that the population of Hokkaidô/Tôhoku is some twenty-five times greater than that of Tottori. The effect of distance cannot be described in conventional terms, however, as friction operating across a continuous space, but must instead be seen in terms of discontinuities, of boundaries between particular and localized internal labour market areas, within which interaction

may be intense, but across which movements are likely to be rare unless there are intervening moves at higher levels in the appropriate organizational hierarchies.

Since transfer activity occurs within systems operating at a variety of spatial scales, it follows that the characteristics of the transferee population detected within a particular geographical area will also be a function of the extent to which that area participates in each system. Consider, for example, the aggregate age distribution of transferee migrants in a peripheral rural prefecture such as Shimane. Within each age group we would expect to find both interprefectural and intraprefectural migrants, but the proportions are likely to vary, for although the career cycles of employees within purely local organizations will be comprehensively included within the data, those for the employees of interprefectural organizations will not. For example, by the later stages of their careers employees in an interprefectural organization are more likely to be located in that organization's headquarters, where senior positions are concentrated, which implies that older individuals detected within local area transfer data (such as that for Shimane) are more likely to be intraprefectural transferees than interprefectural transferees. In effect, the age distribution of interprefectural migrants in peripheral areas will be "decapitated", since mobility between senior posts will mostly take place elsewhere, within an office building in a distant city.

Limited data available on transfers within and beyond Shimane Prefecture in 1987 support this contention: they reveal, for example, that 17.1% of the intraprefectural transferee migrants detected were in their 50s, compared with only 12.2% of interprefectural migrants. Even this one limited case is sufficient, however, to reveal the weaknesses of the argument. There is no reason to suppose that the argument would not also hold true for intraprefectural transfers if the latter were broken down by settlement size, with the older transferees being confined to the largest settlements. In fact, however, there is a larger concentration of transferees in their 50s amongst the very smallest settlements (those with populations below 10,000) than in any other size class - 20.4% of transferees moving to or from such places to other destinations in the same prefecture, as compared with 16.7% for the prefectural capital. If there is a "concentration in headquarters" effect at work at the intraprefectural scale, then it is more than outweighed by other factors, including perhaps the kind of sidetracking in late career described by Rohlen and others as discussed in Chapter 2. Unfortunately, however, there are insufficient data available at present for us to pursue this argument any further.

4.3.3 Regional variations in transfer activity

In this final section we shall explore the extent to which there are systematic variations between different regions of Japan in the relative importance of migration linked to

personnel transfers. In the light of what has already been said, we have good reason to expect that such variations will exist, if only because of the contrast in the degree of urbanization between metropolitan Japan and the broader periphery. But are there any other manifestations of regional variation, for example between Eastern and Western Japan?

It is clear from the discussion in the previous section that whatever we find will be determined in part by the scale at which we define our data, and in this we are at the mercy of the very limited number of sources which provide suitable information. In the National Land Agency and Tōkyō Metropolitan Government survey reports of which so much use has already been made, regional information is published only at the coarsest of scales, and while other prefectural surveys such as those published by Shimane Prefecture provide greater detail, they cover only a tiny and unrepresentative fraction of all transfer activity.

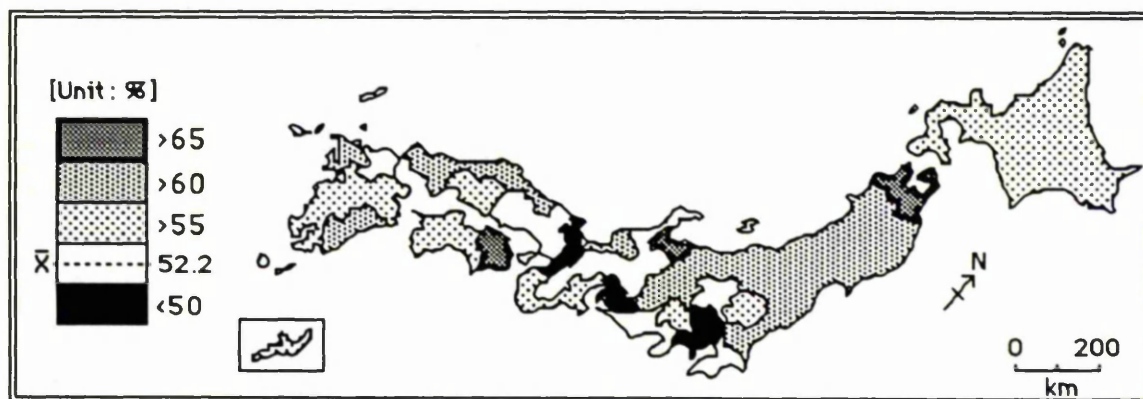
There is one other source, however, to which reference has not yet been made, but which does provide information on personnel transfers in Japan as a whole and at a fairly detailed geographical scale - for individual prefectures. This is the Housing Survey of Japan, which is conducted every five years by the Statistics Bureau of the Management and Coordination Agency. The most recent survey for which reports have been published was undertaken in 1988, but in that year no questions were asked about transfer activity. For data on transfers we must go back to the previous survey, which was conducted in 1983.

Detailed results for a 1% survey of heads of household who changed their place of residence over the 1979-83 period are available from the 1983 survey reports, and include "personnel transfer" (*tenkin*) as one of the reasons for having changed place of residence. Unfortunately, the published tables do not differentiate between long- and short-distance moves, and thus are heavily influenced by conventional suburbanization processes. Some indication of regional variations in the relative importance of transfers can be gained at the prefectural level, however, by comparing migration caused by transfers with other forms of employment-related mobility, such as migration consequent upon persons entering or changing employment.

According to this source, for Japan as a whole some 52.2% of employment-related mobility over the 1979-83 period occurred as a result of transfers, a figure broadly comparable with that of 56.8% obtained for employment-related migration in and out of Tōkyō in the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government's 1981 survey, and the 59.6% of employment-related migration obtained in the National Land Agency's 1980-81 survey. Figure 4.6 reveals wide variation, however, between Japan's forty-seven prefectures. At

one extreme are the major metropolitan prefectures, long the major destination of new job-seekers, which have very low ratios. The lowest ratio, 35.9%, is for Metropolitan Tōkyō, and other prefectures with low ratios include Kyōto (39.0%) and Ōsaka (41.3%). The Tōkyō figure is obviously at odds with that obtained in the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government survey. Note, however, that while the Tōkyō survey recorded each move made by individuals over a one year period, the Housing Survey recorded only the last move made by each individual over the 1979-83 period. Since transfers tend to be repeated on a cyclical basis every few years, the latter survey will clearly have understated the total amount of mobility generated by transfers over the five year period in question, both in absolute terms and relative to other forms of mobility that are more likely to occur on a one-off basis.

Figure 4.6 Personnel transfers as a percentage of all employment-related migration, by prefectures, Japan, 1979-83



Note: Employment-related migration includes migration attributable to transfers, entering employment and changing jobs.

Source: Calculated from data in Sōmuchō (1986), Table 44.

On the other hand, a total of nineteen prefectures have ratios above 60%, (the true figure again being higher still), and of these four have ratios greater than 65%. The obvious feature of these nineteen prefectures is that they are all located in the more peripheral regions of Japan, and in areas which neither contain particularly large cities nor benefit from any suburbanization effects from nearby conurbations.

What Figure 4.6 reveals, therefore, is something of a paradox: although in aggregate terms transfers are predominantly an inter-urban phenomenon, with the largest flows (in both absolute and relative terms) taking place between the very largest cities, the prefectures which rely most heavily upon transfers as a means of exchanging workers with other areas are not those which are the most heavily urbanized. On the contrary, there is a clear core-periphery pattern in Figure 4.6, in which it is the least urbanized and developed prefectures which rely to the greatest extent upon transfers. Part of the explanation for this paradox lies in the aforementioned suburbanization effects operating at the interprefectural scale, which would tend to depress the figures for prefectures in

metropolitan regions. But it is also the case that the most peripheral and backward prefectures are those which are least able to attract migrants for any reason other than that they have been sent there.

Beyond this core-periphery phenomenon, however, it is difficult to detect any distinctive patterns in Figure 4.6. Although it is apparent that the whole of the Tōhoku district depends on transfers for more than 60% of its employment-related migration, the average for Tōhoku as a whole (62.8%) is closely matched by averages for other major peripheral regions, such as Hokkaidō (58.2%), Shikoku (61.5%) and Kyūshū (58.1%). What really distinguishes Tōhoku is not the level of its dependence on transfers but the uniformity of that dependence as compared with other districts. It would be a mistake to make too much of this, however, since the scale of variability within the periphery is dwarfed by that between the periphery and the metropolitan core.

Independent confirmation of this core-periphery dichotomy is provided by data from the National Land Agency survey, which provides a breakdown of migration by cause and major districts, where the latter are somewhat unconventionally defined. These data are shown in Table 4.6, alongside equivalent data recalculated from the Housing Survey to conform to the National Land Agency survey's definitions. While a comparison between the two series reveals differences of detail, the overall pattern is one of similarity (Pearson's $r = 0.74$), with high figures for peripheral districts and much lower ones for the metropolitan districts (in this case Kantō, Tōkai and Kinki). Once again, it is difficult to detect any other patterns in the data.

Table 4.6 Personnel transfers (*tenkin* and *shukkō*) as a component of employment-related migration by districts of origin/destination, Japan, 1980-81 and 1978-82

Unit: % of employment-related migration

	National Land Agency Survey Data (1980-81)	Housing Survey Data (1978-82)
Hokkaidō	70.1	58.2
Tōhoku	59.9	63.0
Kantō	50.2	45.3
Tōkai	51.3	51.7
Hokuriku	64.2	57.1
Kinki	55.0	45.6
Chūgoku	68.6	59.0
Shikoku	70.8	61.5
Kyūshū and Okinawa	57.4	58.0

Sources: Calculated from data in Kokudochō (1982), p. 50 and Sōmuchō (1986), Table 44.

If a cross section across the regions at one point in time reveals no clear deviations from the core-periphery theme, perhaps some will emerge as we shift to a dynamic perspective. Regional data series for more than one year are available only from a limited number of local authority sources, of which the most important are the three surveys conducted by the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government. In an earlier survey conducted in 1971, the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government published migration data by prefectures, but in subsequent reports a far coarser regional classification was employed, which distinguishes only between Tōkyō itself, the other three Southern Kantō prefectures, Northern Kantō, Hokkaidō and Tōhoku, Chūbu and Kinki, and finally Chūgoku, Shikoku and Kyūshū lumped together as one region.

Table 4.7 Personnel transfers as a component of employment-related migration by districts of origin/destination, Tōkyō, 1976-86

Unit: % of Employment-Related Migration

	1976	1981	1986
Hokkaidō/Tōhoku	43.3	49.8	57.3
Northern Kantō	44.5	45.7	53.2
Chūbu/Kinki	64.6	64.3	68.8
Chūgoku/Shikoku/Kyūshū	56.5	54.3	59.6

Source: Calculated from data in Tōkyō-to (1978, 1983, 1988), Tables 2 and 5.

Data from these surveys on transfers (*tenkin*) expressed as a percentage of all employment-related migration are shown in Table 4.7. With the exception of a slight drop in the relative importance of transfers in exchanges with Western Japan in 1981, there has been a consistent increase in the share of transfers within population exchanges between Metropolitan Tōkyō and all four areas listed in the table. Two other features also stand out. First, transfers are consistently more important in exchanges with the Chūbu/Kinki district, which contains Japan's second and third largest metropolitan regions, centred on Nagoya and Ōsaka respectively. Once again, this is consistent with a strong urban bias to transfer activity. Second, there has been a particularly marked increase in the relative importance of transfers in exchanges between Metropolitan Tōkyō and the Hokkaidō/Tōhoku district, which by 1986 had achieved parity with flows between Metropolitan Tōkyō and Chūgoku/Shikoku/Kyūshū. This is not just a relative effect, caused by the decrease in other forms of migration, but is underlain by a real increase in the absolute numbers being transferred - up by 12.2% over the decade 1976-86, as compared with an increase over the same period of 8.9% for Northern Kantō, and absolute drops of 7.2% for Chūbu/Kinki and 15.1% for the remainder of Western Japan. In other words, the intra-organizational personnel transfer linkages between Tōkyō and

its natural hinterland, the Kantô Plain and Northeastern Japan, seem to have undergone further strengthening over the decade, while those with points to the west grew weaker.

Why should this east-west dichotomy exist, such as it is? Three complementary hypotheses may be proposed, although there is insufficient evidence to test any of them at present. First, the strengthening of ties with the northeast may be just one facet of a more general phenomenon - the emergence of a distinctive functional region extending northwards from Tôkyô - which has been reported on at length in the context of the manufacturing sector by Itakura (1988). Second, the decline in transfers to and from Chûbu/Kinki in particular may reflect the increasing domination of Tôkyô over all other major metropolitan regions as a centre of public and corporate administration. If this were true, however, then presumably we would expect transfers to the remainder of Western Japan to have increased, with the reorientation of inter-branch transfers systems towards Tôkyô, whereas quite the opposite has happened. Third, and in explanation of the previous point, we can point to the rise over time in the practice of living apart from the family (*tanshin funin*), as documented below in Chapter 8, as an alternative to full residential migration, and to the parallel rise of long distance commuting as an alternative to any migration at all. Both practices require adequate transport links with the place at which the permanent residence is maintained, and here there is a clear disparity between Japan west of Tôkyô, which has been served by the *shinkansen* bullet train for well over two decades, and Japan east of Tôkyô, which has enjoyed *shinkansen* access to the national capital only since the early 1980s. The hypothesis, therefore, is one of different rates of substitution of residential migration for other mobility forms between Eastern and Western Japan.

All of this, however, is in the realm of speculation, and should not blind us to the main conclusion of this section, which is that the dominant regional variable underlying transfer patterns is indeed the level of urbanization.

4.4 Summary of Chapter 4

In this chapter we have moved beyond the characteristics of transferees and of the organizations which employ them, in a search for regularities in the patterns of transfer activity in time and space. Personnel transfers were found to have increased in importance relative to other forms of migration over the past twenty years, although growth in absolute numbers has been marginal at best. There have been marked fluctuations in transfer activity from year to year, which may be correlated with economic cycles, but through complex mechanisms, the full elaboration of which lies well beyond the scope of this thesis. Other temporal patterns in transfer activity are revealed on a seasonal basis and in the average duration of individual postings.

We then switched our attention to the spatial dimension. It is clear that migration generated by personnel transfers does have a distinctive geography of its own, in which the dominant element is the relationship with settlement size. Beyond the effects of scale, distance appears to have little autonomous effect upon the volume of transfer flows: rather, it is the location of the boundaries between different labour markets that counts. Although the largest absolute flows of transferee migrants are between Japan's metropolitan regions, transfers actually account for a much higher proportion of employment-related migration in and out of the more backward prefectures, largely because these are rarely destinations of choice.

All of the material presented in this chapter has been based upon published reports and tabulations, made available on an aggregated basis. To go beyond this level, and explore how the patterns described in this chapter are actually generated at the level of internal labour markets operating within specific organizations, new sources of data are required, and different forms of analysis. In the next two chapters we employ case studies to explore the spatial characteristics of personnel transfers at a more detailed scale, with the focus upon individual large organizations, and as a result, we shall discover that underneath the rather obvious generalizations made in this chapter there are some very intricate geographical processes at work.

Chapter 5 Programmed Transfers: The Geography of Job Rotation in the Japanese Civil Service

5.1 Introduction

In this and the next chapter, we examine case studies of personnel transfers within specific Japanese organizations, as a means of exploring the processes which generate spatial patterns in transfer activity. It would be wrong to claim that a small number of case studies can adequately reflect the full range and diversity of large Japanese organizations, and no such claim is made here. Rather, our purpose in these chapters is to illustrate how it is that transfers of various types come about, and how in turn they may be channelled in particular directions. In the process we shall open up new questions which can only be answered by more widespread research, a topic to which we shall return in Chapter 9.

The first case study is of a structurally stable organization, in which personnel transfers take place on a regular and predictable basis along well-trodden routes. The transferees are managers and administrators, elite employees dedicated to the pursuit of careers that lead upwards through the corporate hierarchy and, by accident or design, from one place to another. This is job rotation (*tenkin*) in the narrow sense, taking place as a normal event and as an integral and automatic part of the organization's operations. Much thought may go into the selection of the right person for each and every job, but the selection process is codified and integrated into the ordinary business of management. In this sense these are "programmed" transfers, repetitive and predictable events, unlike the one-off shifts which occur during the process of structural change, and to which we turn in Chapter 6.

We have seen that government and finance are two of the key sectors in which personnel transfers take place. Most government departments, local authorities, banks, savings institutions and insurance companies in Japan operate under a simple, common hierarchical administrative structure. This structure may incorporate different ranks and labels, and vary in depth and geographical spread between individual organizations, but it still bestows a high degree of commonality across managements in these two sectors, and indeed wherever large organizations are found within the Japanese economy, irrespective of the actual business to which a particular organization is dedicated. It is a bureaucratic model, in which formal lines of authority are drawn with military precision, although form and substance need not always coincide. The example given later on in Figure 5.1 and Appendix B is typical of the genre, with clear hierarchical and nested relationships

between different parts of the organization (in this case the Ministry of Labour), and with well defined ranks for individual members of staff.

This does not mean, however, that every section or bureau is of equal weight, or that all section chiefs or branch managers share similar powers and responsibilities. For example, two officials of a commercial bank may share the title "chief of the general affairs section", yet one may control a staff of less than a dozen in a country bank branch, while the other has responsibility for hundreds of staff and the safekeeping of vast sums of money in the same bank's foreign exchange division. The qualifications and experience required for these two posts are very different, and the individuals who hold them are unlikely to compete at any stage in their careers. More to the point, they will spend their working lives in worlds that are both hierarchically and geographically separate. One will be lucky to spend part of his career in the bank's regional headquarters, a temporary sojourn from years of exile in local branches; the other will remain in Tôkyô most of the time, where all the big decisions are made, but will enjoy frequent visits to the world's financial capitals as well in the normal course of his work, and some of these visits may be on an extended basis. Yet they are both constrained by the organizational framework within which they build their careers, and while the geographical scale may vary, the framework is the same. It is this fact which opens up the possibility that generalizations can be constructed about the geography of job rotations that transcend the specifics of particular organizations.

This possibility has not been extensively explored in the Japanese geographical literature, with two important exceptions: a study of transfers within the leading "city banks" by Togura, and an analysis of mobility within the Ministry of Construction by Yamaguchi, both of which were published in the volume edited by Itô et. al. (1979). We shall examine Yamaguchi's work in detail in the next section, since it forms a point of departure for our own case study. As for Togura's methodology and results, these may be summarized as follows.

Togura made use of the 1975 and 1978 issues of Diamond-sha's Directory of Company Employees, an annual volume which lists the name, rank and personal details of many thousands of Japanese managers and executives in all the major private companies. By comparing the entries for the staff of the twelve main banks, he was able to identify persons who had been transferred at least once over the intervening period, although the date of the move and the period of each posting could not be specified with any accuracy. Multiple transfers within the study period go unrecorded, although some could have been detected had the volumes for the intervening years been consulted as well. As far as the present author is aware this is the only occasion upon which the Directory of Company Employees has been used for this purpose, yet it is one of two

sources of information on transfers in the private sector which offer tremendous possibilities for future research, some of which are explored in Chapter 9. (We may note in passing that the other source, which appears never to have been exploited by geographers, consists of lists of personnel transfers which are published in the major business newspapers and magazines on a regular basis).

Togura found that the pattern of interregional migration within the banks is dominated by movement among the three leading metropolitan regions of Japan, with moves between the metropolitan regions and the provinces ranking second in importance, and moves between provincial regions coming a very poor third. This obvious urban bias reinforces some of the findings reported in the previous chapter. Southern Kantô emerges as the main area of origin for interregional transfers to all regions except Kyûshû, which has traditionally fallen within the economic orbit of the Kinki (Ôsaka) district. A high proportion of the managers present in Hokkaidô, Southern Kantô and Kinki in 1978 had also been there in 1975, a fact which Togura attributes to two factors. First, in the case of Southern Kantô and Kinki, extensive networks of branch banks create many opportunities for local mobility, a structural factor linked once again to the level of urbanization. Second, banking in Hokkaidô, unlike banking elsewhere in Japan, is dominated by just one institution, the Hokkaidô Takushoku Bank, to the extent that of all bank directors and managers currently resident in Hokkaidô in 1978, two-thirds were employees of Hokkaidô Takushoku alone. Here we see the effect of a rather different structural constraint, the areal spread of a specific organization's operations, introducing a strong regional element into the pattern of mobility.

Togura also explored the relationship between horizontal and vertical mobility within the banks. He found that just over 40% of all migration either accompanied a promotion or involved a transfer from a branch bank to a section chief's desk or an even higher position in the bank's headquarters, whereas close to 50% of transfers did not involve a detectable promotion for the individuals concerned. More than half of transfers into Tôkyô were linked to promotion, but the majority of moves from Tôkyô to the main provincial cities involved no change of status. The result, given that the bulk of transfers take place on a reciprocal exchange basis between regions (though not between posts), is a concentration of promoted individuals within metropolitan regions, although this of course does little more than reflect the underlying distribution of suitable positions.

In short, Togura's study serves to confirm the importance of the urbanization variable as a structural constraint upon transfer activity, as well as the spatial distribution of the operations of specific organizations, which may introduce a strong local bias into transfers whenever (as in Hokkaidô) a particular institution holds a dominant position within a regional market. These are interesting observations, but they are limited in a

number of key respects. First, they tell us nothing about the career paths of the individuals concerned, since the data refer simply to a cross section through mobility during one brief period. Second, they are described only at a very high level of regional aggregation, and thus do not permit an examination of differences in mobility between, for example, large and small settlements. Third, the units of measurement - flows between regions - have been imposed somewhat artificially upon the data, without reference to the ways in which the banks themselves organize space, in terms of service areas, the relative status of particular branches and the like. And fourth, although the data have been summed across a number of institutions, there is little indication of the extent to which the banks vary in their personnel practices.

While Togura's study is of value for its concentration upon private sector institutions, therefore, we must search elsewhere for a detailed geographical analysis of mobility and job rotations in a Japanese managerial bureaucracy. The best candidate is the parallel study of a public sector institution by Yamaguchi (1979), to which we now turn.

5.2 Job rotation in the Ministry of Construction

Like several other central government ministries, the Ministry of Construction operates an extensive network of regional centres and local branch offices throughout Japan, in addition to its headquarters in Tōkyō. At the time Yamaguchi prepared his study the Ministry had some 29,000 regular employees, spread between six bureaux at headquarters, eight provincial bureaux covering the major regions and located in cities such as Sendai, Niigata, Hiroshima and Fukuoka, 220 works offices and nearly 700 branch offices and administrative sub-offices (ibid., p. 187). This network formed the basis for a large volume of personnel transfers, which were detected using the Directory of the Ministry of Construction which was published by the magazine *Kokudo Kaihatsu Journal* in 1979. This listed the present and previous posts of each senior employee, together with the year in which he entered government service, the university from which he graduated, his place of birth and other details. It is unclear from Yamaguchi's account whether this Directory listed the entire career of each individual, or just the most recent change of post, but certainly Yamaguchi only made use of the latter information. Despite this limitation, however, Yamaguchi was able to assemble an impressive data set, for 998 employees of the Ministry of Construction, which he then broke down in various ways to illustrate relationships between geographical mobility, career paths and the characteristics of the individuals concerned.

A key variable in his analysis was one to which little reference has been made in earlier chapters of this thesis: segmentation within the internal labour market. The meaning of segmentation in this context is the division of the workforce into what are

essentially non-competing groups, which normally occupy entirely different sets of posts. The basis of segmentation in the case of the Japanese public sector is whether or not the employee has passed the Japanese Higher Civil Service Examination: those who have done so (so-called "career bureaucrats") are usually hired nationally straight into the central bureaucracy from one of the leading universities, while those who have not (the "non-career bureaucrats") are more likely to be hired locally and from a less prestigious institution. For operational purposes, Yamaguchi divided the employees in his sample on the basis of the universities from which they graduated, with graduates of the "Seven Former Imperial Universities" (Hokkaidô, Tôhoku, Tôkyô, Hitotsubashi, Nagoya, Kyôto, and Kyûshû Universities) plus Waseda, Keiô and Chû University in the elite group. Even this rather crude division proved to be a powerful tool in distinguishing alternative patterns of career mobility.

Yamaguchi described the differences in the vertical component of career mobility between the two groups in the following terms:

"Within 3 or 4 years of entering the Ministry of Construction, career bureaucrats have generally attained the rank of chief clerk. After 8 or 9 years they are promoted to the rank of deputy section chief, and after 19 or 20 years they attain the rank of section chief. After that, there follow a number of changes of post, until finally one member of the group of bureaucrats who entered public service together is promoted to the position of vice-minister. When this happens all other members of the group resign, taking jobs either with semi-governmental agencies or in the private sector. On the other hand, non-career bureaucrats are unlikely to attain the position of deputy section chief in one of the headquarters bureaux until they have served 25 years, and very few ever get that far. For those who do, it is the highest rank they will ever achieve." (ibid., p.187, my translation)

In the course of building these careers both groups are subject to geographical transfers from time to time. Yamaguchi approaches this mobility from two perspectives: the positions that particular individuals have reached in the bureaucracy after a given period of service, and the geographical structure of actual transfer activity. The first of these approaches provides useful insights into the relationship between horizontal and vertical mobility within the Ministry, as follows:

"Of the career bureaucrats who graduated before 1955, 63% now work in the Ministry's headquarters: 25% have attained at least the rank of bureau chief or department chief within headquarters, and 28% are section chiefs there. Another 27% head regional bureaux or departments within regional bureaux. But only 15% of non-career bureaucrats hold positions in the Ministry's headquarters, and not one individual from this group has achieved the rank of bureau chief or department chief there. Indeed, only 3% of non-career bureaucrats have even reached the level of section chief within headquarters, and just 2% head regional bureaux or departments within regional bureaux. Of those non-career bureaucrats who are currently working at headquarters, the largest group (9%) have reached the position of deputy section chief. Of those working in regional bureaux, the largest group have become section chiefs or professional officers (26%), and in local branches the largest group are now branch managers (28%). As far as individuals who graduated after 1965 are

concerned, the career bureaucrats amongst them have already become deputy section chiefs at headquarters, or else section chiefs or professional officers in regional bureaux, but very few of the non-career bureaucrats in the same cohort have as yet become technical or administrative officers at headquarters or professional officers/section chiefs in the regional bureaux." (ibid., p.189, my translation).

A clearer picture of the geographical component of mobility emerges from Yamaguchi's analysis of the most recent round of transfers, as follows:

"The career bureaucrats are clearly oriented towards the Ministry's headquarters: 30% of moves involving this group actually took place within headquarters, and only 22% of moves took place at the regional bureau or branch office level. 63% of career bureaucrats who had previously been stationed in regional bureaux were subsequently transferred to headquarters, as were 45% of those stationed in local branches. By contrast, however, only 9% of moves involving non-career bureaucrats took place within the Ministry's headquarters, whereas 66% of moves amongst these officials involved postings at the regional bureau and local branch level. Only 32% of the non-career bureaucrats who had previously been stationed in regional bureaux, and just 4% of those formerly in local branches, were subsequently transferred to the Ministry's headquarters." (ibid., p.189, my translation)

In other words, mobility amongst career bureaucrats conforms to a "stellar" pattern of oscillation between the headquarters and regional posts, in what are (in geographical terms at least) reciprocal exchanges of staff, whereas the mobility of non-career bureaucrats is more likely to follow a "circuit" pattern, involving several moves between branches at the same hierarchical level.

Geographical segmentation within the Ministry's internal labour market can also be seen in the typical structure of career paths. The normal pattern of promotion for career bureaucrats takes them successively through the posts of chief clerk or deputy section chief at headquarters, to section chief or professional officer in a regional bureau, to deputy section chief at headquarters, to manager of a local branch, to professional officer at headquarters, and at last to the post of section chief at headquarters. For the non-career bureaucrat, career paths are dominated by moves between regional bureaux and local branches, and are largely confined within these limits. The implicit distinction that emerges from this aspect of Yamaguchi's work, therefore, is one between labour markets defined at two distinct spatial scales, the national and the local, the one nested inside the other, again in close accord with the evidence presented at a far more aggregated level in the previous chapter of this thesis.

From a geographical perspective, however, a major limitation of Yamaguchi's work is that no evidence is presented on the extent of variation in mobility within the broad hierarchically-defined categories of "regional bureaux" and "local branches". Yet for non-career bureaucrats in particular, circulation within a particular hierarchical level appears to be the norm. The question therefore arises: what order (if any) exists in the geographical

pattern of mobility at a given hierarchical level, and more generally, what is the nature of the relationship between horizontal and vertical mobility defined at a finer spatial scale?

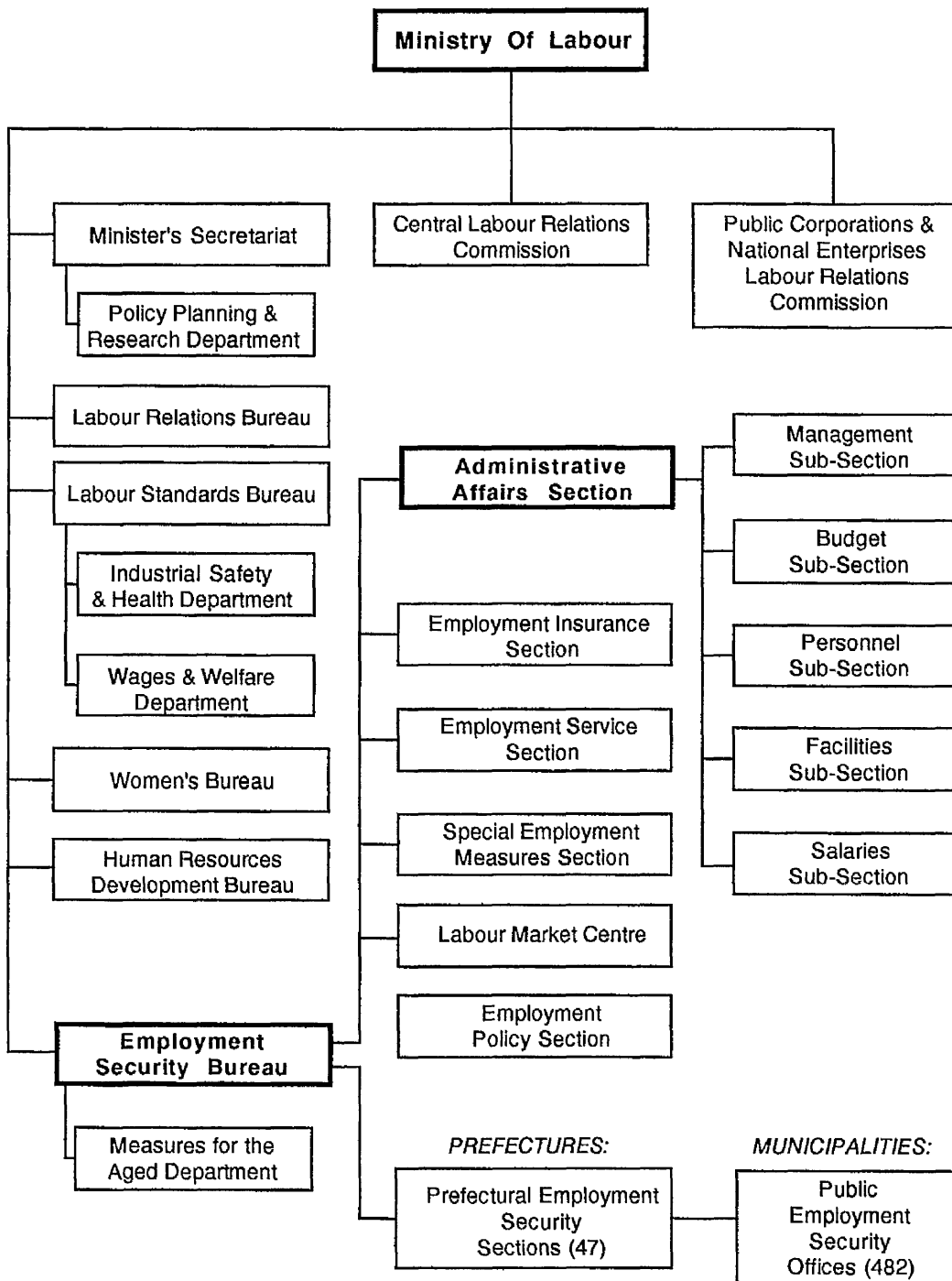
The analysis presented in the next section seeks to answer precisely this question, and thus explores in considerable detail the ways in which geographical space is incorporated into - and indeed structured by - a typical bureaucratic organization. In the process, an attempt is also made to overcome the other obvious limitation of Yamaguchi's pioneering work: the fact that it is a completely isolated case study, from which it is impossible to determine whether the results follow from the general logic of job rotation within large organizations, or from the specific characteristics of this particular Ministry. By examining a completely different Ministry, we shall at least be able to test the extent to which Yamaguchi's conclusions hold true elsewhere in the government sector. But we can also go further. By undertaking comparisons between prefectural level organizations within the same Ministry, we shall to some extent isolate the effects of geography from those of function and vertical structure.

5.3 Job rotation in the Japanese Civil Service: Evidence from the Ministry of Labour

5.3.1 Introduction: The Ministry of Labour as a case study

The materials presented in this section build upon the author's earlier contributions to the study of career mobility within the Japanese bureaucracy, and more specifically within the Ministry of Labour (Wiltshire, 1983 and 1990). The organizational structure of the Ministry of Labour is broadly similar to that of the Ministry of Construction, with activities defined at three distinct spatial scales: the national headquarters in Tôkyô, which is itself divided into a number of bureaux, administrative offices located in each of the forty-seven prefectural capitals and linked to specific bureaux at the centre, and local branch networks providing direct services to customers (Figure 5.1 and Appendix B). The division into bureaux marks an important cleavage within the Ministry in personnel management terms, for while senior career managers move quite freely between bureaux, particularly at later stages in their careers, local, non-career and specialized professional staff are more likely to spend their entire working lives within just one bureau. Such cleavages are not uncommon in Japanese central government institutions, and often find expression in, for example, intra-ministerial policy disputes. The important point in the present context, however, is that the division into bureaux effectively divides the Ministry into number of separate internal labour markets, particularly at the local branch network level.

Figure 5.1 Organizational structure of the Japanese Ministry of Labour and the Employment Security Bureau



Note: Sub-divisions shown for the Employment Security Bureau and (for illustrative purposes) the Administrative Affairs Section only: all other bureaux and sections, Prefectural Employment Security Sections and Public Employment Security Offices have sub-divisions which are not shown. For further details see also Appendix B.

Source: Adapted from Institute of Administrative Management (1985), p. 25, and from various issues of the journal *Shokugyô Antei Kôhô*.

There are two local networks: the Labour Standards Offices (not shown in Figure 5.1), which are affiliated through prefectural administrations to the Labour Standards Bureau (hereafter: LSB) within the Ministry's headquarters, and the Public Employment Security Offices (PESOs), which are the particular object of interest through much of this case study. There are at present around 480 PESOs in Japan, each of which has a specific administrative area attached to it and from which it draws its clientele - persons seeking work and/or claiming unemployment insurance benefits. Each PESO is supervised by the prefectural level Employment Security Section (hereafter: ESS), which forms part of the general prefectural administration (normally as part of the prefectural Labour Department), but is staffed by a combination of local employees and career bureaucrats rotated in from Tôkyô, and more especially from the Ministry's Employment Security Bureau (ESB).

These various operations provide a hierarchically structured geographical matrix within which the potential exists for complex patterns of staff mobility to develop. Mobility patterns are further constrained, however, by the well-defined hierarchical grading of staff within each level. As in most Japanese bureaucracies (including the Ministry of Construction), the same grading structure operates at each level: the section chief (or *kachô*), for example, is assisted by one or more deputy section chiefs (*kachô hosa*), who in turn outrank a variable number of lower level officials, who in the case of the Ministry of Labour normally bear the title of some form of inspector or professional officer (*kansatsukan*). The inspectors are themselves subdivided into ranks (chief inspector, deputy chief inspector, and plain inspector), below whom there are many chief clerks (*kakarichô*: sometimes known as sub-section chiefs) as there are minor divisions of the section itself. There are sections like these within every bureau at the Ministry's headquarters, within every prefectural administration, and within every PESO.

Above the section level structures do vary: each PESO has a branch manager (*jochô*) and deputy manager (*jijochô*), for example, for which there is no equivalent at the prefectural or national scales. These are matters of detail however: the central point is that these grading structures do exist, and in so doing they further constrain geographical mobility through job rotation, but in complex and to some extent unpredictable ways.

To appreciate this point, consider the case of an official who has completed a period of service as the deputy manager of an important PESO located in one of the prefecture's largest cities. To what sort of place will he next be transferred? If he retains the rank of deputy manager, then it is reasonable to assume that he may be promoted to an even more important PESO in an even larger city. But what if those positions are all filled? The time may have come to recall him to the prefectural headquarters, or perhaps to promote him to the rank of full branch manager. But in what sort of branch? Is a transfer from the

position of deputy manager in a large PESO to that of manager in a small PESO a promotion or a demotion? What is the trade-off between vertical distance (across ranks) and the geographical importance of places? One purpose of this case study will be to explore the nature of trade-offs of this kind. The point to be made here, however, is that while the fine details of the results will naturally be specific to the Ministry of Labour and to the prefecture, the trade-offs from which they are derived are an inevitable consequence of the bureaucratic structures that have been so widely adopted by organizations throughout the Japanese economy. The implication must be, therefore, that a search for similar patterns of mobility engendered by trade-offs between vertical and geographical status stands a very strong chance of success.

5.3.2 Data and methodology

We noted in Chapter 3 that extraordinarily large amounts of data on personnel transfers and related matters find their way into print in Japan, for reasons that combine a comparatively relaxed attitude towards the "confidentiality" of personal data with an intense demand for this kind of information - to identify key business contacts and to keep track of former colleagues, classmates and potential rivals in the hunt for promotion. For the purposes of this chapter it has been possible to obtain data of a high quality from three separate published sources, full details of which are given in Appendix C, and which may be summarized as follows.

Transfers are listed on a regular basis in the journal *Shokugyô Antei Kôhō*, which is published three times each month on behalf of the Ministry's Employment Security Bureau. These data refer to employees of two kinds: elite officials who spend most of their time in the Ministry's headquarters in Tōkyō, and local officials who spend their entire working lives employed within the boundaries of a particular prefecture. The data are specific to general managers, and exclude specialist technical staff. Each entry includes the date on which the transfer was formally scheduled to take place, the name of the individual concerned, and details of both the new post and the post vacated.

These data were collected from copies of *Shokugyô Antei Kôhō* published throughout the period January 1975 - December 1989, nominally a span of fifteen years, although in practice it is possible to infer career development patterns over a rather longer period, since the information obtained also covers the posts held immediately before, and immediately after, the study period itself. In effect, therefore, the study period extends to about 17-18 years. The 1975 cut-off was applied in part because of practical difficulties involved in obtaining comprehensive data for years prior to that date, but also because there was a major structural reform at that time, which makes comparisons of posts held before and after 1975 very difficult. Similarly, the December 1989 cut-off point was

invoked for pragmatic reasons related to the timing of data coding. The data collected for 1975-1989 are for elite ministry officials only: for local prefectural officials, the cut-off point was December 1987, again mainly for reasons related to the mechanics of machine entry, although a second important consideration is that few of the completed career segments detected for local officials stretch across anything like fifteen years (unlike those for ministerial officials), so a fifteen-year period is more than adequate to obtain the fullest possible picture of career mobility at this level.

The actual compilation of career information from this source was undertaken by means of a computerized database constructed by the author, from which all information pertaining to each specific individual was extracted and checked for internal consistency. The checking process involved a comparison of each post vacated with the previous post assumed: where these were not the same, a gap in the data set was assumed and a dummy entry inserted, though without a precise date being assigned to the intervening transfer.

No such checking is possible, of course, beyond those points where each individual first appears in or exits from the data set. The earliest records for most ministerial officials occur when they vacate the post of chief clerk (*kakarichô*) at headquarters, at which time most are transferred to a provincial post for one or two years. These initial recorded transfers take place several years after each official has entered public service, with the result that the record of geographical mobility is incomplete in the early stages of the typical official's career. Beyond the point at which the post of *kakarichô* is vacated, however, the career profiles compiled from entries in *Shokugyô Antei Kôhō* appear to be fairly comprehensive. Amongst local officials, a much higher level of seniority is required before a mention is likely to be earned in the same journal: typically, the most junior ranks recorded are those of deputy section chief (*kachô hosa*) in a prefectural headquarters and deputy branch manager (*jijochô*) or, on a few occasions, section chief (*kachô*) in a local PESO. As for points of exit, in the case of both elite and local officials most career profiles terminate with the formal resignation from public service of the individuals concerned.

Overall, a total of 7,586 transfers were recorded for local officials in what we shall henceforth call the "SAK data set", and which constitutes what would appear to be the most detailed information ever assembled on geographical mobility within a large organization at the intraprefectural scale. Some 216 of these transfers (or 2.8% of the total) were actually inferred from inconsistencies in the data set and thus could not be dated precisely: all other transfers, with the obvious exception of lowest-level promotions and retirements, were successfully cross-checked for accuracy between the initial record of arrival in a particular post and the subsequent record of departure. From this we may conclude that the SAK data set is an extremely accurate record of mobility at the local

level. Another 2,491 transfers were recorded amongst elite ministry officials (of which 270 transfers, or 10.8% of the total, were inferred from inconsistencies between records), and until recently this section of the data set could equally be considered a unique source of information on mobility at the interprefectural scale - and it is still extremely useful as such. The ministerial-level data have recently been complemented, however, by the publication of a second and extraordinarily rich source of data, the Directory of the Ministry of Labour, by the company Jihyôsha in 1989.

The Directory contains a complete list of senior Ministry of Labour officials serving in 1989, together with personal details such as place and date of birth, educational background, year of entry into public service and, most important of all, substantial amounts of information on the career histories of each individual. In the case of elite officials these career histories go back equally as far as the records assembled for the SAK data set - to the point at which the post of chief clerk is abandoned in favour of a provincial posting, normally at the rank of section chief. There is, therefore, a substantial amount of overlap between these two sources of data. Both, however, have particular advantages which ensure that neither is made entirely obsolete by the other. The information in the SAK data set covers a long period of time, over which numerous individuals resigned from public service and thus do not appear in the 1989 Directory. It is true that the SAK entries contain no personal details about the individual transferees, but these have been obtained from a third source of information on transfers within the Ministry - the annual directory of public employees published by the company Tôyô Keizai Shimpôsha, which duplicate the information on currently-serving individuals available in the 1989 Jihyôsha Directory, but also provide information (from earlier issues) on officials who retired at a much earlier date. The big advantage of the 1989 Directory, on the other hand, is that it also includes career information on a wide range of Ministry of Labour officials other than the generalist managers who normally fill the main posts within the Employment Security Bureau and its affiliates, such as specialist staff serving in the Labour Standards Bureau, adding considerably to the variety of information available on career profiles within the Ministry.

To summarize, a substantial body of data on mobility within the Ministry of Labour has been assembled from these various sources, and will now be examined for any signs that a distinctive geography of personnel transfers exists within this particular organization. Before the analysis begins, however, it is important to enter no fewer than five caveats.

First, there are many questions that could be addressed with these data but which will not be addressed here, simply because they do not bear upon the central theme of this thesis: the *geographical* aspects of mobility within internal labour markets. It would be

possible, for example, to judge the extent to which the various bureaux at headquarters are open to transfers to and from each other, and perhaps this would have some bearing upon the true locus of power within the Ministry. The answer would probably tell us little, however, about transfers from one *place* to another, for which reason the subject would not be an appropriate one in the present context.

Second, since the focus is upon geographical transfers, we shall not encompass the entirety of individual careers, but upon those career segments in which spatial mobility is most likely to be observed. Under the circumstances this is clearly a desirable narrowing of focus, but it must be stressed that it is also an entirely artificial approach. The officials included in the data set have experienced their careers as a continuous journey, in which transfers from one place to another have been one event amongst many. Moreover, the careers of particular officials have been interrelated in complex ways, not least because the vacating of a post by one person has created new opportunities for others. We are dealing with a complex mosaic of intertwined careers, and extracting from that mosaic only the fragments which are coloured by geography.

Third, while there is almost too much data available on some aspects of mobility within the Ministry, some vital information is missing, the most obvious item being the reasons why particular individuals have been allocated to specific posts. This is undoubtedly a weakness, especially when dealing with the fine details of particular moves. In practice, however, most of the questions that will concern us are defined at a sufficiently general level of aggregation that the fine detail is effectively lost anyway, for we will be interested in commonalities across careers, not in the fate of named individuals, and at this level the possibilities for variations in mobility patterns are severely limited by structural constraints.

This is a very important point, because it demonstrates that pure inference of the type deployed in this case study has a useful role to perform. The research to be described here has been based entirely upon a wealth of public records, and has not relied upon contacts with the Ministry itself. Indeed, given that the author was unable to visit Japan during the period in which the data set was constructed, and that access to materials was restricted to publications and other material obtained directly from Japanese publishers and, via contacts in the field, from libraries and bookshops, it is difficult to see how progress could have been made if an inferential approach had not been adopted. Clearly, however, there are limits to what can be learned about an organization's activities by observing it from outside and from a distance. Our fourth caveat, therefore, is that at various points in the analysis we shall reach the demonstrable limits of inference, beyond which it becomes necessary to ask directly of the Ministry what its detailed policies are on career development and geographical mobility, and to ask these questions of those

individuals who are actually responsible for turning general policy into specific transfer orders. There is no reason why this should not in fact be done, and the empirical and inferential work reported in this case study is likely to aid such an enquiry, by focusing attention upon key questions. The fact remains, however, that at this stage in the research the Ministry has not been asked to present its own case, and this is an obvious gap to be filled by future research, as will be explained in Chapter 9.

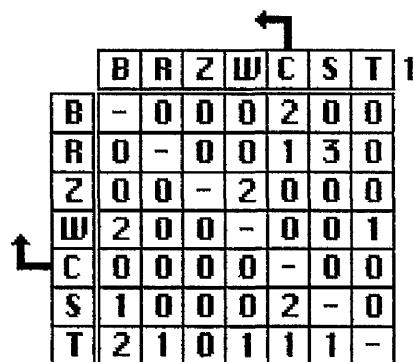
Finally, the data upon which the research is based refer to mobility between posts (jobs), rather than mobility between residences, so the extent to which pure labour mobility is translated into actual population migration cannot be assessed. For short distance moves, particularly at the intraprefectural scale, much of the labour mobility revealed by the data is likely to be expressed in the form of commuting rather than migration, while interprefectural moves of a short and predictable span may well trigger the *tanshin funin* response (living apart from the family) rather than full residential mobility. The problem of how labour mobility is translated (or not, as the case may be) into migration proper is a fundamental one in research on the geography of internal labour markets, and we shall return to it at length in Chapters 7 and 8. As far as the specific case of the Ministry of Labour is concerned, however, it is a problem upon which no particular light can as yet be shed.

5.3.3 The hierarchical construction of space

In this section we examine the extent to which the Ministry of Labour imposes some degree of order upon geographical space in the context of arranging personnel transfers. The results will show conclusively that transfers are channelled through spatial frameworks which display clear hierarchical structures, and that the status of a particular location within such a hierarchy is strongly correlated with its relative "size". We will present evidence that this generalization holds true both for transfers at the local intraprefectural scale and, at a higher level, for transfers between prefectures.

We begin at the intraprefectural scale, and with evidence first reported in Wiltshire (1990, pp. 41-42). The analysis deals with all moves within Japan's forty-seven prefectures over the 1975-87 period that involved the transfer of an individual from the position of branch manager in one local PESO to that of branch manager in another PESO. In other words, the nominal rank of the employee has been held constant, so that a pure expression of geographical mobility can be obtained, free of any overt form of vertical mobility. This particular job was selected for the simple reason that as the most senior post in any PESO it is the only one to be reported consistently in the *Shokugyô Antei Kôhô* transfer lists.

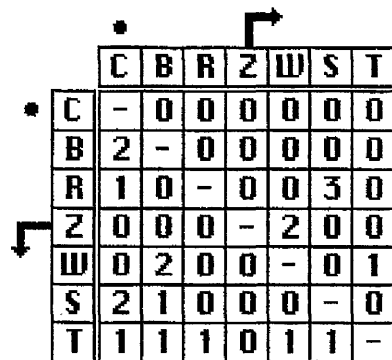
Figure 5.2 Illustration of the method of determining hierarchical differentiation between places on the basis of origin/destination data for personnel transfers



	B	R	Z	W	C	S	T	
B	-	0	0	0	2	0	0	
R	0	-	0	0	1	3	0	
Z	0	0	-	2	0	0	0	
W	2	0	0	-	0	0	1	
C	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	
S	1	0	0	0	2	-	0	
T	2	1	0	1	1	1	-	1

STEP 1:

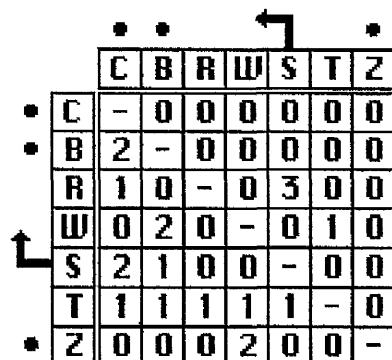
The raw data are represented as an interaction matrix, with origins listed down the left hand side, destinations along the top, and the number of transfers between each origin and destination recorded in the cells. The total number of transfers recorded to the right of the diagonal is 9. Place C is always a destination, never an origin, and it should therefore be displaced as far as possible upwards and to the left, to maximize the number of zeros to the right of the diagonal.



	C	B	R	Z	W	S	T	
C	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	
B	2	-	0	0	0	0	0	
R	1	0	-	0	0	3	0	
Z	0	0	0	-	2	0	0	
W	0	2	0	0	-	0	1	
S	2	1	0	0	0	-	0	
T	1	1	1	0	1	1	-	

STEP 2:

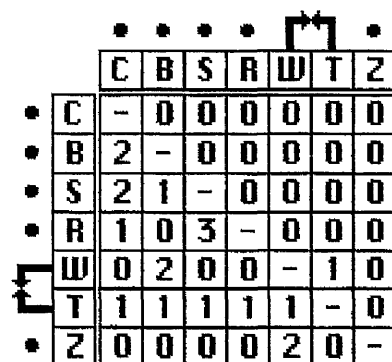
Place C is now in the correct position (•) in the matrix. The total number of transfers recorded to the right of the diagonal is now 6. Place Z is always an origin, never a destination, and it should therefore be displaced as far as possible downwards and to the right.



	C	B	R	W	S	T	Z	
C	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	
B	2	-	0	0	0	0	0	
R	1	0	-	0	3	0	0	
W	0	2	0	-	0	1	0	
S	2	1	0	0	-	0	0	
T	1	1	1	1	1	-	0	
Z	0	0	0	2	0	0	-	

STEP 3:

Places C and Z are now in the correct position (•). Place B is also in the correct position (•), since it is always a destination, never an origin, except in relation to Place C. The total number of transfers recorded to the right of the diagonal is now 4. Place S is also always a destination, never an origin, except in relation to places C and B. It should therefore be displaced to the next vacant position upwards and to the left. (This process is iterated as necessary, alternating between moves upwards/to the left and downwards/to the right, until all places are in the correct position).



	C	B	S	R	W	T	Z	
C	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	
B	2	-	0	0	0	0	0	
S	2	1	-	0	0	0	0	
R	1	0	3	-	0	0	0	
W	0	2	0	0	-	1	0	
T	1	1	1	1	1	-	0	
Z	0	0	0	0	2	0	-	

STEP 4:

Places C, B, and S and Z are now in the correct position (•). Place R is also in the correct position (•), since it is always a destination, never an origin, except in relation to Places C, B and S. The total number of transfers recorded to the right of the diagonal is now 1. Transposition of Places W and T also yields a total of 1, indicating that there are two optimal solutions, each of which minimizes the total value of the elements above the diagonal.

A total of 869 such transfers were included in the SAK data set. To identify the hierarchical relationships between places, data on these transfers were converted into interaction matrices for each prefecture, matrices which were then rearranged in such a way as to minimize the total value of the elements above the diagonals (as illustrated in Figure 5.2). In theory, if there is a perfect hierarchical differentiation between each and every post, then all transfers should appear below the diagonals of the interaction matrices, and all elements above the diagonals should be zero.

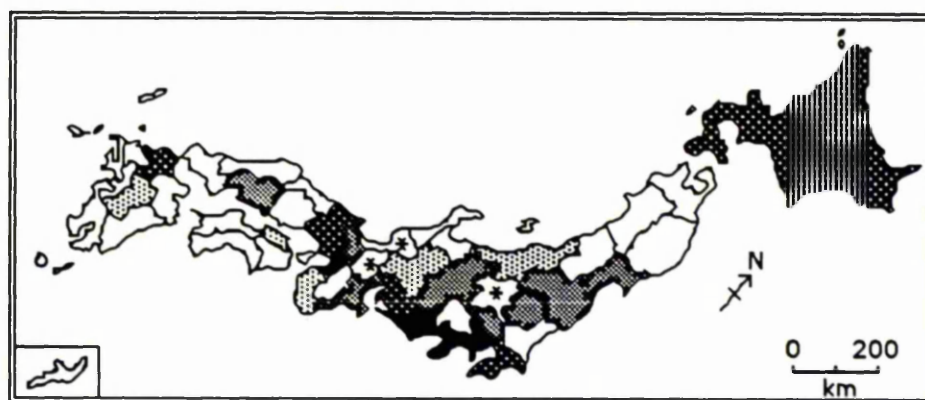
When this procedure was applied to these 869 transfers it was found that all but 24 (2.8%) lay below the diagonal of the appropriate optimised matrix, and of these 24 exceptions all but one arose because of reciprocal exchanges of personnel between two or more PESOs. Clearly there are strong, indeed almost perfect hierarchical relationships between PESOs within each prefectures, relationships which constrain the direction of transfers between any two locations.

But what determines the precise position of one PESO relative to others in a particular hierarchy? In an organization dedicated to providing a service to the general public, the obvious criterion to look at first is the number of people actually served. Unfortunately data are not available on how many people use each PESO; it is possible, however, to calculate as a surrogate the base populations from which these users are drawn, since each PESO has a defined service area (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1987b).

The 1980 populations of 445 of the 481 service areas were calculated from the results of the national census of that year. (Of the remaining 36 PESOs, 28 have service areas which include subdivisions of municipalities for which no data are recorded in the census, and 8 are specialized institutions serving mariners and port workers, whose service areas overlap those of several conventional ones). Over the 1975-87 period there were a total of 738 direct transfers of branch managers among these 445 PESOs, of which no fewer than 598 (81%) were transfers to PESOs with larger service areas (in population terms), and only 140 (19%) to PESOs with smaller service areas. Moreover, when transfers were to PESOs with smaller service areas the differences in population were generally marginal, the main exceptions being in heavily urbanized prefectures such as Tôkyô and Ôsaka. In such prefectures population may well be a poor surrogate for the PESO's actual clientele, which will tend to be inflated in areas where universities are concentrated or where there are large numbers of small factories. Besides, no organization can adjust its operations and procedures overnight to mirror every shift in the underlying distribution of the population. Given these considerations, the strength of the match that has been demonstrated between population size and the direction of transfers at the intraprefectural level is very impressive indeed.

A similar match can also be detected at the interprefectural level, though using a rather different methodology and an alternative source of data - the Directory of the Ministry of Labour published by Jihyôsha. Entries in the 1989 Directory were examined carefully, and records were extracted for all instances in which an individual bureaucrat, whether a generalist manager or a technical specialist, experienced a transfer between one prefectural administration and another without undergoing a simultaneous change in rank or job title. A total of 142 such transfers were identified, mainly involving job rotations between the various prefectural LSBs (Labour Standards Bureaux), and which have therefore passed unrecorded in the *Shokugyô Antei Kôhô* listings upon which the analysis of intraprefectural transfers has been based.

Figure 5.3 Classification of prefectures into ten groups on the basis of the direction of interprefectural transfers within the Ministry of Labour



- | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-2 |  | Group 1: Tôkyô, Kanagawa
Group 2: Shizuoka, Ôsaka |
| 3-4 |  | Group 3: Chiba, Aichi
Group 4: Hokkaidô, Hyôgo, Fukuoka |
| 5-6 |  | Group 5: Miyagi, Saitama, Mie, Hiroshima
Group 6: Fukushima, Tochigi, Nagano, Kyôto |
| 7-8 |  | Group 7: Niigata, Gifu, Wakayama, Kumamoto
Group 8: Yamagata, Ibaraki, Yamanashi, Okayama,
Yamaguchi, Nagasaki |
| 9-10 |  | Group 9: Toyama, Ishikawa, Nara, Ehime, Kôchi, Okinawa
Group 10: Aomori, Iwate, Akita, Tottori, Shimane, Tokushima,
Saga, Ôita, Miyazaki, Kagoshima |
| |  | Insufficient Data: Gunma, Shiga, Fukui |

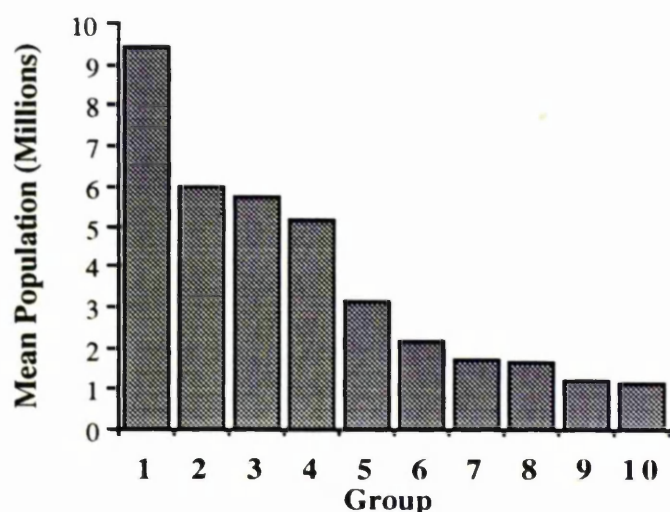
Source: Data extracted from Jihyôsha (1989).

Note: Only transfers which involve no change in job title other than the location qualify. Transfers take place within groups, but no transfers take place from one group to any other group ranked below it. Prefectures with insufficient data are those listed only one or two times in the data source.

Japan's forty-seven prefectures were then sorted into hierarchically related groups, in accordance with the criterion that transfers should only take place in one direction

between groups, although transfers within groups could be reciprocal. The comparatively small size of the data set means that this operation could be performed very easily within a simple spreadsheet. Ten discrete groups were identified, between which the direction of flow is completely one-way. Unfortunately, the amount of evidence available varies markedly from one prefecture to another, with Hokkaidô at one extreme, occurring eighteen times as the origin or destination of particular transfers, while Fukui and Shiga appear only twice, and Gunma just once. The last three prefectures were excluded from further analysis on account of this paucity of data, leaving forty-four prefectures spread rather unevenly between the ten groups, as shown in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.4 Mean populations of prefectures in the ten interprefectural transfer groups, 1985



Source: Data extracted from Jihyôsha (1989) and the 1985 National Census.
 Note: For definition of the groups, see Figure 5.3

The populations of these forty-four prefectures were then extracted from the 1985 National Census, and the mean populations of prefectures within each group were calculated, as shown in Figure 5.4. The results are again very striking: a perfect relationship (in ordinal terms at least) between population size and the hierarchical position of the ten groups as determined from transfers data. To some extent the result is fortuitous: the groups at the three highest levels each contain only two members, and the population of the smaller prefecture in Group 2 (Shizuoka) is less than that of any prefecture in Groups 3 or 4. The relationship with population is therefore somewhat questionable as far as hierarchically adjacent groups are concerned, but it is clear and highly significant between groups further apart in the hierarchy. For example, a difference of means test between the populations of prefectures in Groups 1 to 4 on the

one hand and Groups 5 to 8 on the other yields a result that is significant at the 99% confidence level ($t=7.22$), while a similar test between Groups 5 to 8 and 9 to 10 proves significant at the 95% confidence level ($t=2.22$).

The conclusion to be drawn from these results, therefore, is that irrespective of the scale at which the particular system of transfers is defined, the geographical space within which those transfers take place is carefully ordered along hierarchical lines. Furthermore, since the basis of the hierarchical structure is the "size" of different places, it follows that there is a distinctly arbitrary element built into the hierarchy of places, since the service areas which provide the practical definition of "size" are themselves based upon inertia and convenience as much as any geographical necessity. For example, it would be possible to merge two suburban PESOs in a densely populated area, creating double the population within the new service area and thus boosting the new PESO's status within the hierarchy, without requiring any material changes in the underlying distribution of population. Indeed, much the same effect could be manufactured even without closing one of these PESOs, simply by manipulating the service area boundaries in favour of one office at the expense of another. For this reason, therefore, we can speak of a hierarchical construction of space, wherein mobility is controlled not by independently determined characteristics of settlements and regions but by artificial boundaries and service areas created to suit the convenience of the organization concerned.

One consequence of this hierarchical construction is a marked "ratchet effect", in which an individual who has been posted to a particular place cannot subsequently be transferred to any place that is smaller, or at least not if his or her rank or job title otherwise remains the same. Mobility is therefore channelled ever upwards, from smaller places to large ones, much as predicted in a more general context by Flowerdew (1982, p. 217), when he suggests that transfers between branches will take the form of "a series of moves from the smallest centres gradually ascending both the urban and corporate hierarchy". The difference in this case, however, is that there is no ascent of the corporate hierarchy other than to the extent that the latter is embodied within the hierarchical construction of space itself: after all, by definition, the ranks and titles of the individuals whose mobility has defined the hierarchy have remained unchanged. This purely geographical characteristic of mobility within internal labour markets is overlooked in the work of Flowerdew and other commentators, and with it an obvious consequence: if ascent from the smallest places to the largest is possible without any other associated changes in status, then there must also be a means of returning individuals to lower positions within the geographical hierarchy in mid-career. Otherwise, the more senior management posts at the local level would never be filled. There must come a point, therefore, at which the individual is ready for a vertical promotion involving a clear

increase in status and rank, whereupon the ratchet will slip, and a transfer may occur to a smaller place. If this happens, however, the ratchet will immediately be restored - until the next vertical promotion. As Flowerdew suggests, the geographical ascent may indeed be gradual, but from time to time there will be steep descents to be recovered as well. The question of when and how these sudden descents occur will be explored in a later section.

Before we address that issue, however, there are a few other aspects of pure geographical mobility to consider, and in particular the extent to which segmentation within the Ministry's internal labour markets is reflected in the geography of transfer activity.

As in the Ministry of Construction, the primary basis for segmentation within the Ministry of Labour is the line between "career" and "non-career" bureaucrats, which is related once again to the universities from which particular individuals graduated. It will be shown later on that a fine distinction also exists between two groups of career bureaucrats: those who graduated from elite universities and those who did not. In geographical terms, however, the primary distinction to be made is between the career bureaucrats, who inhabit the Ministry's headquarters most of the time, and the non-career bureaucrats, whose working lives are normally spent in one specific prefecture.

Judging from the evidence, most career bureaucrats within the Ministry of Labour are likely to be posted out of Tôkyô at least once after they have achieved the rank of chief clerk (*kakarichô*), but only in the rarest of circumstances do these transfers lead anywhere other than to a prefectural capital, and to a post within the prefectural government's bureaucracy. For example, the SAK data set includes 1,467 cases in which career bureaucrats vacated posts located in the Ministry's headquarters. In the majority of cases (54.8%), the individual was simply transferred to another headquarters post, but another 15.5% were sent to other ministries or institutions, and 29.7% (or 436 in all) were switched to posts located in the prefectures. Of the 436 transfers to prefectural posts, a very high proportion (311, or 71.3%) were to the post of chief of the Employment Security Section (ESS) or its equivalent within the prefectural government, another 10.1% were to posts higher up in the prefectural government's bureaucracy, and 16.7% were to positions lower than section chief. As a result, only 7 transfers to posts at the prefectural level, or 1.6% of the total, bypassed the prefectural government building and terminated instead in a local PESO. This is a remarkable level of geographical segmentation, and it is more than matched by the infrequency with which prefectural level non-career bureaucrats are transferred to the Ministry's headquarters: of the 7,586 transfers of such officials recorded in the SAK data set, only 3 (or 0.04%) involved a move to Tôkyô.

In short, because of segmentation within the Ministry's internal labour market there are almost no direct transfers between what are in both geographical and vertical terms the highest and lowest levels within the Ministry's organizational structure. Staff with experience of working at the Ministry's headquarters will normally only work alongside staff with experience at the most local level if they both happen to have been posted to the same prefectural capital. This segmentation not only acts as a barrier to vertical mobility amongst non-career bureaucrats, but it also sets very firm limits to the scope for geographical mobility: of the 7,586 transfers recorded at the prefectural level, not one resulted in the movement of an individual from one prefecture to another, other than the tiny number who ended up in Tôkyô.

It may be the case that transfers between the extremes of the Ministry of Labour's organization do occur quite frequently amongst younger members of staff, during the course of their early training and well before they attain the rank of chief clerk. And certainly it would be a mistake to argue from the data presented here that such transfers never occur within the Japanese bureaucracy: indeed, there is clear evidence to the contrary. Published information (Jihyôsha, 1990) on staff mobility within the Ministry of Postal Services for example reveals that almost all career bureaucrats in that Ministry are given the chance to run a local post office for a while five or six years after they have entered public service, and prior to moving on to a regional postal bureau. The point to be made, however, is that once the initial few years of training are over, and the individual official has become familiar (through rotation) with all aspects of the Ministry's work, he or she is most unlikely to work in a local post office again.

In this respect, the data for the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Postal Services, and indeed the Ministry of Construction as reported by Yamaguchi (1979) are broadly consistent. In each case, a multi-layered organizational structure creates the possibility of direct transfers between the largest and smallest settlements but segmentation within the internal labour market ensures that this possibility is not realized, other than at a very early point in the individual's career. Under normal circumstances, segmentation is reflected in areally nested internal labour markets, much like those described on a more general basis in Chapter 4. Within these markets, transfers are most likely to take place between settlements which are at the same level in the hierarchy (as determined by the specific organization's construction of space) or between immediately adjacent levels, rather between large and small settlements, again mirroring our findings in Chapter 4.3.1 on the relationship between transfers and settlement size.

While segmentation operates in a gross way to divide careerists from non-career bureaucrats, and intraprefectural transfer systems from their interprefectural equivalent, it

can also operate in more subtle ways. For example, it helps to dictate the speed at which different individuals negotiate the same path between a series of posts, and thus the chances that each will eventually arrive at the same destination.

To illustrate this point, consider the case of career bureaucrats within the Ministry of Labour who have achieved the rank of chief clerk, and who are now to experience what is likely to be their only posting to a prefectural administration, as the new chief (*kachô*) of the local Employment Security Section (ESS) or its equivalent. Data on all individuals who found themselves in this position between 1975 and 1989 were extracted from the SAK data set, and as many as possible were traced through various editions of the directories published by Tôyô Keizai Shimpôsha, to determine both the age at which they experienced this particular transfer and the university from which they had graduated. Complete information could be obtained for only twenty-seven individuals, thirteen of whom had attended the former imperial universities, most having graduated from the most distinguished faculty within the most prestigious of the former imperials - Tôkyô University's Faculty of Law, and fourteen were graduates of other institutions, mostly having studied at Chûô University. In his research on the Ministry of Construction, Yamaguchi lumped all of these institutions together in defining his elite group of "career bureaucrats". The evidence from the Ministry of Labour suggests that this was an oversimplification, for of the thirteen graduates of the former imperials, ten vacated the post of chief clerk between the ages of thirty and thirty-four, while of the fourteen graduates of other institutions, eleven had to wait until they were in their forties before doing so. The sample size is obviously very small, due to the fact that most of the individuals who had passed through this post had still not reached a sufficiently senior position by 1990, the date of the most recent directory available, to merit a listing. Nevertheless, the difference between these two groups of graduates, when expressed as numbers vacating the post of chief clerk while in their thirties as compared with those who have to wait longer, proves to be highly significant in statistical terms (Chi-squared = 10.8, which is significant at the 99% confidence level). Even with this limited amount of data, therefore, a very strong relationship can be demonstrated between the rate of progress through the Ministry's organizational structure and the educational background of individuals within the "career bureaucrat" elite.

5.3.4 Patterns of geographical mobility

In the previous section, we saw how the direction of transfers within the Ministry at any particular level within its organizational structure is constrained by the hierarchical construction of space. What is not yet clear, however, is how many moves are likely to occur between separate geographical locations before the individual bureaucrat finally

returns to headquarters, to await further vertical promotion, another slip of the ratchet, and another outward posting.

There are two basic patterns that geographical mobility can display, both in the career mobility of individuals and in the configuration of a set of coordinated postings taking place at any one time. In our discussion of Yamaguchi's work on the Ministry of Construction, these patterns were given the labels "stellar" and "circuit". The "stellar" pattern is one of oscillation between the headquarters and regional posts, in what Hägerstrand (1969) describes as a process of "reciprocal replacement", while the "circuit" pattern involves the rotation of staff between branches and thus around the periphery of the organization at a particular hierarchical level. In practice, of course, these circuits will be spiral in form, since they must also take the individual or individuals involved to progressively larger places if they are to conform to the organization's own hierarchical construction of space, but they are also true circuits, since they are constrained to begin and end at the same location - the organization's headquarters. Later in this section we shall consider some of the reasons why transfers may conform to one or other of these two patterns. First, however, it may be helpful to provide a brief illustrative example of each, drawn from the record of interprefectural mobility within the Ministry of Labour's bureaucracy.

For an example of the stellar pattern of transfer activity, consider the case of the chiefs of the Employment Security Sections in each prefecture. These posts are normally filled by officials brought in for a year or two from Tōkyō, rather than by locally hired staff. Once his tour of duty is over, the prefectural ESS chief can confidently expect that his next move will be straight back to Tōkyō. Evidence for this comes from the SAK data set, which reveals that of 348 individuals who vacated this post over the period 1975-89, 323 (or 92.8%) returned directly to Tōkyō, to jobs either in the Ministry's headquarters or with affiliated organizations, while only 19 (or 5.5%) moved on to other posts at the prefectural level.

Bureaucrats exiting from a more senior post within the same Ministry however, that of bureau chief (or deputy chief) in a prefectural Labour Standards Bureau, are far more likely to move to another prefectural posting than to the Ministry's headquarters. From the evidence presented on individual careers in the 1989 Directory of the Ministry of Labour, it is possible to detect 46 instances in which this post was vacated, and in 33 (or 71.7%) of these cases the individual concerned was rotated to a similar post in another prefecture - that is, conforming to the "circuit" pattern of geographical mobility.

This bias towards "circuit" mobility is also evident lower down within each prefectural LSB, at the section chief level. According to data extracted from the same

source, of 172 individuals vacating the post of section chief within a prefectural LSB, 97 (or 56.4%) moved to a similar job in another prefecture, and in one case it was possible to trace six separate moves between prefectural posts, including a direct promotion from section chief to the bureau chief level (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5 An extreme example of consecutive moves of the "circuit" type within the Labour Standards Bureau of the Ministry of Labour

April 1976	Chief Clerk (Awards Section) Labour Standards Bureau Ministry of Labour
October 1977	Section Chief (Awards Section) Labour Standards Bureau SAGA Prefecture
April 1979	Section Chief (Awards Section) Labour Standards Bureau ISHIKAWA Prefecture
April 1980	Section Chief (Inspection Section) Labour Standards Bureau ISHIKAWA Prefecture
April 1982	Section Chief (Awards Section) Labour Standards Bureau NIIGATA Prefecture
April 1984	Section Chief (Inspection Section) Labour Standards Bureau KYÔTO Prefecture
April 1987	Section Chief (Inspection Section) Labour Standards Bureau ÔSAKA Prefecture
April 1988	Bureau Chief Labour Standards Bureau TOTTORI Prefecture
	Deputy Bureau Chief Labour Standards Bureau TÔKYÔ Prefecture

Source: Data extracted from Jihyôsha (1989), p. 81.

What accounts for the difference in the pattern of mobility between these two wings of the same Ministry? The answer would appear to lie in a combination of three factors: policy, segmentation and structure. Judging from the career profiles of most senior Ministerial officials, it is standard policy to dispatch these people to the provinces for a year or two once they have attained the rank of chief clerk in the Ministry's headquarters, and many of these individuals assume the post of prefectural ESS chief at this stage in

their careers. More than enough individuals vacate the post of chief clerk each year to ensure a replacement for each departing ESS chief, which implies that any increase in the amount of rotation taking place at the ESS chief level would increase the difficulties faced by the Ministry in locating suitable posts for its former chief clerks. As for the departing section chiefs, most are confined to the Ministry's headquarters for many years thereafter, rising eventually to fill the most responsible positions there. Whether by design or through structurally imposed necessity, therefore, the "stellar" pattern of mobility is the norm.

The position of ESB bureau chief does not perform this training role within the organization, however, which means that its occupants are drawn from a wider range of backgrounds. Of the 46 cases in which this post was found to have been vacated, only 8 (17.4%) involved the transfer of graduates of the elite "former imperial universities", compared with 30 (or 58.8%) of the 51 cases detected in the same source of individuals vacating the post of prefectural ESS chief. At this senior level, most of the important posts at headquarters are permanently occupied by elite graduates, blocking the career and promotion prospects of everyone else. With most avenues to Tōkyō blocked, the main alternative (other than retirement) is to circulate staff between prefectural branches instead. Thus segmentation within the internal labour market reinforces the structural effect which is produced by a shift in the number of suitable posts at this level in favour of the prefectures.

This segmentation factor is also at work at a finer scale, influencing the probability of "stellar" versus "circuit" moves even amongst the occupants of senior positions (section chiefs and bureau chiefs and their deputies) in the prefectural LSBs. Adding departures from all of these posts together, we find that of 16 cases involving a graduate of one of the "former imperial universities", only 5 (31.2%) were of the "circuit" type, in the sense that the subsequent post occupied was also in a prefectural LSB, compared with equivalent figures of 105 out of 173 (60.7%) for graduates of other universities and 20 out of 29 (69.0%) for graduates of senior high schools. Despite the small numbers in the sample in the two extreme groups, these differences are more than sufficient to achieve significance at the 95% confidence level (Chi-squared = 6.48). In the case of the LSB section chiefs, however, there is also an important structural effect at work, in as much as each bureau contains several sections, so the total number of posts available among which staff can be rotated is substantially larger than is the case at the bureau chief level.

This last observation highlights the underlying difficulty in interpreting which of several complementary factors is the most important in explaining the difference in mobility patterns between two or three parts of a single organization, when in reality much of that difference may be due to unique attributes of the organization itself and of its

constituent parts. There is no way of avoiding this problem, unless the organization happens to be internally subdivided in such a way that numerous divisions share the same functions and structure, with the latter having a variable geographical expression. This, unfortunately, is not the case in those parts of the Ministry of Labour that are frequented by interprefectural transferees, but it is the case at the intraprefectural level. In particular, each of the prefectural PESO networks, together with those posts in the prefectural headquarters which are normally occupied only by local bureaucrats, offer an excellent (and possibly a unique) opportunity to study the geography of mobility within an organization with the functions and many of the structural features of that organization essentially controlled for.

The local managers whose mobility is recorded in the SAK data set operate within an internal labour market that displays no clear evidence of segmentation, although no information on the educational background of these people is available with which to test this proposition in a formal manner. On the assumption that segmentation is not a significant factor, however, there remain just two explanations for variations in the relative importance of "stellar" versus "circuit" mobility comparing one prefecture with another: structure, interpreted (for the moment at least) as the relative occurrence of headquarters and branch posts, and policy. Since the latter can only be inferred from the information available, it is sensible to look first at the possibilities for a structural explanation. The analysis that follows was first reported in Wiltshire (1990, pp. 46-47), but the interpretation of the results has been updated and revised, in the light of the arguments presented above.

Transfers recorded at the intraprefectural level were divided into three categories: those within the prefectural headquarters, those between the headquarters and a PESO, and those between two PESOs. The totals were found to vary considerably between prefectures. To determine whether this was simply a consequence of differences between prefectures in the relative frequencies of appropriate managerial posts in the headquarters buildings and the PESOs, (i.e., whether it was the result of structural factors), all such posts were identified from the data set and the ratios of their occurrence for each prefecture were subjected to binomial expansion. If the relative frequency of posts is the sole determinant of mobility, then there should be a very close fit between each expansion and the shares of the total number of transfers accounted for by moves between PESOs, within headquarters, and between PESOs and headquarters in each prefecture.

In practice, however, the binomial expansions were found systematically to overpredict some types of transfers, and to underpredict others. For example, the expansions underpredicted the proportion of transfers that take place between PESOs and headquarters, by an average of eight percentage points, in forty-three out of forty-seven

prefectures. Conversely, direct transfers between PESOs were overpredicted for thirty-nine out of forty-seven prefectures. In other words, PESO staff face a higher probability of being transferred back to headquarters, and a lower probability of being moved instead to another PESO, than would otherwise be the case. In effect, there is a tendency to rotate staff between PESOs and headquarters on a reciprocal basis, much as career bureaucrats are rotated in from Tôkyô to head each prefectural ESS: a bias in favour of "stellar" mobility at the expense of the "circuit" form.

Superficially at least, this evidence would appear to support the idea that deliberate mobility policies are in operation, perhaps to keep PESO staff up to date with ideas at the centre, modifying what would otherwise be the dominant effect of structural constraints on mobility, and in the process bestowing upon the headquarters a "switching point" role, along the lines hypothesized by McKay and Whitelaw (1981, p. 110). Whether or not this is actually the case can only be determined through direct contacts with the appropriate decision-makers in the prefectural bureaucracies, along the lines proposed in Chapter 9.

There is an alternative explanation, however, derived not from the inference that policy variables are at work, but rather from a recognition that the treatment accorded the structural variable has involved gross oversimplification. In the calculations of the binomials, posts at headquarters and in the PESOs were treated separately and in total disregard of the possibility that they may be structurally interlaced, in the sense that they may form a single and complex continuum along which individual career paths are constructed, and along which posts are ordered without regard to whether they are located in the headquarters or elsewhere. In other words, the results may stem from a totally artificial distinction between geographical mobility within internal labour markets and vertical mobility through the organizational hierarchy, when these two are actually intimately and inseparably linked.

In the next section, we shall examine evidence on the interrelationship between geographical and vertical mobility within the Ministry of Labour, at both the interprefectural and intraprefectural scales, in order to demonstrate that this interlacing of posts does in fact exist, and that it has important implications for the geography of job rotation.

5.3.5 Geographical and vertical mobility

There would appear to be two ways in which geographical and vertical mobility can be interlaced. The first was referred to in Section 5.3.3 as the "ratchet effect", in which an individual who has undertaken a sequence of moves through geographical space, without

promotion, undergoes an enhancement in status sufficient to permit a second tour of duty through the provinces. This promotion, and associated slide down the settlement size ladder, may occur after the individual has returned to headquarters or at an earlier point, in which case two "circuits" will overlap. The second assumes that all posts are ranked on a continuum that ignores the facts of geography, such that a particular headquarters post, for example, is considered to be superior to *some* prefectural postings at a particular hierarchical level, but inferior to others. Under these circumstances, a posting back to headquarters ("stellar" mobility) may well interrupt what would otherwise be an unbroken "circuit". In fact, the first version of interlacing is just a more restrictive version of the second, with the implicit rule that a return to and/or a departure from headquarters *must* be rewarded by promotion.

Evidence on the extent to which interlacing operates within the Ministry of Labour is available at both the interprefectural and intraprefectural scales in the SAK data set. First let us consider the interprefectural case, as illustrated by the mobility of individuals assuming or exiting from the post of section chief in a prefectural ESS or its equivalent - a group to which much reference has already been made.

Table 5.1 Posts previously occupied by prefectural employment security section chiefs, 1975-1989

	Number	Percent
Headquarters: Deputy Section Chief	58	16.6
Headquarters: Inspector	78	22.3
Headquarters: Chief Clerk	146	41.7
Prefectural posts	23	6.6
Other (headquarters or other organizations)	44	12.6
Retirement	1	0.3
Total	350	100.0

Source: Data extracted from *Shokugyô Antei Kôhô*, various issues.

A total of 350 transfers into the post of prefectural ESS chief are recorded in the data set for the 1975-89 period as a whole. Table 5.1 breaks these transfers down according to the post previously occupied. Three headquarters posts are listed by name (in order of seniority): deputy section chief (*kachô hosa*), inspector/professional officer (*kansatsukan*), and the most junior rank, chief clerk (*kakarichô*), while a small number of

other former headquarters staff with unusual titles are included in the "other" category (29 out of the 44).

Table 5.2 Posts previously occupied by prefectural employment security section chiefs by size of prefecture, 1975-1989

	Total	1985 population (millions)		
		>5	2-5	<2
	(No.)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Headquarters: Deputy Section Chief	58	52.5	25.0	3.7
Headquarters: Inspector	78	11.5	13.9	28.1
Headquarters: Chief Clerk	146	0.0	36.1	55.3
Other	68	36.1	25.0	12.9
Total	350	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data extracted from *Shokugyô Antei Kôhô*, various issues.

The largest group by far listed in the table are those who previously held the rank of chief clerk. These individuals together constitute exactly two-thirds of the 219 transfers of former chief clerks recorded in the data set, and of the remainder another 22.4% were transferred to other prefectural posts, leaving just 10.9% who were transferred to posts other than at the prefectural level. While a prefectural posting is the likely next destination for an ex-chief clerk, however, the majority of prefectural sections chiefs still arrive by other routes, most notably from the more senior headquarters posts of inspector and deputy section chief, which together account for almost as many transfers as ex-chief clerks do. What then is the principal determinant of whether a particular prefecture is likely to receive an ex-chief clerk, or a former deputy section chief, or some other official as a new section chief? We have already established that the prefectures are generally differentiated in importance in line with their relative populations, and this suggests that there may be a relationship between the size of a prefecture and the former status of incoming section chiefs.

This suggestion is strongly confirmed by Table 5.2, in which the 46 prefectures (excluding Tôkyô, which has no comparable post) have been grouped into three arbitrary size classes: those with populations above five million in 1985, those with populations between two million and five million, and the remainder, with fewer than two million people. The table shows the distributions of new prefectural section chiefs by origin and prefecture size, and the pattern is striking. Not a single section chief in any of the largest prefectures had been drawn directly from the ranks of the chief clerks; instead, over a half had already attained the rank of deputy section chief at headquarters before being

transferred, while over a third had come from "other" positions both within and beyond the Ministry. Conversely, a clear majority of section chiefs in small prefectures had formerly been chief clerks, and only a tiny percentage had achieved deputy section chief status within the Ministry's headquarters prior to their current postings. There are also regular if less dramatic relationships between prefecture size and the shares of former inspectors (the larger the prefecture group, the smaller the share) and of persons transferred from "other" positions (the larger the prefecture group, the larger the share). Clearly then, there is no direct equivalence between the post of section chief in a prefectural bureaucracy and any one rank at headquarters. Rather, there is a sliding scale of equivalence running from low headquarters posts and small prefectures to high headquarters posts and large prefectures.

For most transferees, accession to the rank of prefectural section chief is itself a promotion, for few subsequently resume their old rank in the headquarters bureaucracy (and in the case of former chief clerks, none do).

This vertical promotion aspect can be seen clearly by comparing Table 5.1 with Table 5.3. The former chief clerks have all been promoted, and there is also a slight decrease in the proportion of inspectors, but deputy section chiefs are now twice as common as before, and holders of posts other than those specified in the table are three times as numerous.

Table 5.3 Posts subsequently occupied by former prefectural employment security section chiefs, 1975-1989

	Number	Percent
Headquarters: Deputy Section Chief	131	37.6
Headquarters: Inspector	64	18.4
Headquarters: Chief Clerk	0	0.0
Prefectural posts	19	5.5
Other (headquarters or other organizations)	128	36.8
Retirement	6	1.7
Total	348	100.0

Source: Data extracted from *Shokugyô Antei Kôhō*, various issues.

Table 5.4 shows, as one would expect, that there is also a very strong relationship between the size of a prefecture and the post likely to be taken by its former section chief. Nearly all section chiefs in the large prefectures subsequently move on to posts other than those listed by name in the table, (these are mostly senior posts within the Ministry's headquarters), but only half of the transferees from medium size prefectures do so, and

less than a third of those from small prefectures. Conversely, much higher proportions of former prefectural section chiefs from both small and medium sized prefectures subsequently become deputy section chiefs in the Ministry's headquarters, and while nobody from large prefectures and hardly anyone from medium sized prefectures subsequently become inspectors, more than a quarter of former section chiefs in small prefectures do so.

Table 5.4 Posts subsequently occupied by former prefectural employment security section chiefs by size of prefecture, 1975-1989

	Total	1985 population (millions)		
		>5	2-5	<2
	(No.)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Headquarters: Deputy Section Chief	131	12.1	44.3	42.3
Headquarters: Inspector	64	0.0	5.7	27.3
Headquarters: Chief Clerk	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	153	87.9	50.0	30.5
Total	348	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data extracted from *Shokugyô Antei Kôhô*, various issues, and the National Census.

So far in this discussion, each transfer into or out of the post of prefectural section chief has been treated as an independent event. Over time, however, these events are linked together by the evolving career of each official and, given the range of headquarters posts with which exchanges take place, it is not surprising that some individuals have experienced postings to the position of prefectural ESS chief more than once. Data on these individuals have been extracted from the SAK data set, and analysed to determine the relative sizes of the prefectures concerned and the interval between the termination of the first posting and the commencement of the second. Given the hierarchical nature of the relationship between prefectures, one would expect that (a) the great majority of second postings are to larger prefectures than the destinations of the first postings, and (b) that the greater the hierarchical distance between two destinations, the greater the elapsed time between the termination of the first posting and the commencement of the second.

A total of forty-four individuals were identified who had been posted at least twice as prefectural section chiefs, and of these three had been posted three times in their careers, giving a total of forty-seven gaps between one posting and another. (The exact gap was unknown in two cases, because the moves had been inferred). The distribution of these postings is shown in Table 5.5, and the results are striking: of the forty-seven gaps, only

one separated a move from a larger prefecture size group to a smaller, another six lie within the same size group - and thus may or may not conform to hypothesis (a), and forty clearly conform to the hypothesis. As regards length of time elapsed, the numbers in each cell are too small to derive meaningful averages, except for gaps linking postings in the prefectures with fewer than 2 million people and postings in prefectures with 2-5 million people, which average 37 months, and gaps linking postings in the prefectures with fewer than 2 million people and postings in prefectures with more than 5 million people, which average 53 months. The difference between these two means clearly supports hypothesis (b), and a two sample difference of means test only just fails to establish statistical significance ($t=1.625$, $p=0.0569$).

Table 5.5 Earlier and later postings of officials who have been prefectural employment security section chiefs at least twice by size of prefecture, 1975-89

	1985 population at destination of later posting (millions)		
	<2	2-5	>5
1985 population at destination of earlier posting (millions)			
>5	3	1	0
2-5	4	2	0
<2	20	16	1

Source: Data extracted from *Shokugyô Antei Kôhô*, various issues, and the National Census.

To summarize then, the evidence on interprefectural transfers within the Ministry of Labour at the prefectural ESS chief level offers strong support for the idea that geographical and vertical mobility are strongly interlaced, not just at the ends of the settlement size spectrum, but also at various points along that spectrum, such that geographically distinct posts in the prefectures and vertically distinct posts in the Ministry's headquarters form a continuum, along which each individual's career must be constructed.

It could be argued, however, that this "continuum" is fairly meaningless, since we already know that almost all transfers amongst this group are "stellar" in form, and only a minority of individuals actually perform the role of prefectural section chief more than once in their careers. There is no way of answering this criticism at the interprefectural level, because there are so few geographical transfers other than those to and from the

post of prefectural ESS chief. The data available at the intraprefectural level are far richer, however, and do contain numerous cases of multiple moves between different locations. It is to this evidence that we now turn. Much of the analysis of this data has already been reported elsewhere (Wiltshire, 1990, pp. 42-45), so we shall confine our observations to the main findings.

The analysis focuses once again upon the mobility of PESO branch managers, a group who are particularly prone to transfers of the "circuit" type, and who were used to define the hierarchical construction of intraprefectural space in Section 5.3.3. There are various ways in which individual officials first assume the role of PESO branch manager, most of which involve a promotion from a headquarters post, but one involves promotion while "in transit" through the PESO network, from deputy branch manager to branch manager. In other words, we have a case where two vertically distinct "circuits" overlap. Under these circumstances, we would expect the "ratchet effect" which normally propels staff from smaller places to larger ones to disengage, opening the way for transfers back down the settlement size spectrum. Close inspection of the data for the 1975-87 period strongly confirms this expectation. Of 390 recorded transfers involving promotions from deputy manager to manager, only 13 (3.4%) were to places further up the hierarchy of PESOs (as defined by the optimized interaction matrices for transfers of managers); the remaining 377 transfers (96.6%) were all downwards. In other words, when rank remains constant, the individual moves up the hierarchy of PESOs but when rank is enhanced through promotion, he moves down again - but for only one move, after which the geographical ascent is resumed.

There are even a small number of cases in which this rule applies in reverse. Thus 62 transfers were recorded involving an apparent demotion in rank, from PESO manager to deputy manager: in every single case, the transfer was to a far more prestigious PESO, thereby effectively compensating for the reduction in the individual's formal status.

As for transfers between the prefectural headquarters and local PESOs, it is rather difficult to construct aggregate figures on the relationship between geographical and vertical mobility, first because several headquarters posts are unique to the larger prefectures, second because some frequently recorded posts at the prefectural level, particularly that of inspector (*kansatsukan*), can have more than one occupant simultaneously (these are "pooled" posts in White's terminology), and third because the fine details of the interlacing of field and headquarters posts varies considerably between prefectures, depending in part upon the specific size distribution of settlements in a particular prefecture.

The easiest way to approach transfers between the prefectural headquarters and local PESOs is at the most senior end, where these ambiguities are much reduced. There are no "pooled" posts at the highest level in each prefectural bureaucracy, and there is a general commonality of job titles: only the size distributions of settlements vary.

Table 5.6 Transfers between the three most senior posts open to prefectural officials, 1975-87

From	Manager, PESO, Prefectural Capital	Section Chief, EIS, Prefectural Capital (HQ)	Chief Manager, ESS, Prefectural Capital (HQ)
To			
Retirement	276	154	7
Manager, PESO, Prefectural Capital	-	114	55
Section Chief, EIS, Prefectural Capital (HQ)	3	-	143
Chief Manager, ESS, Prefectural Capital (HQ)	0	0	-
Manager, #2 PESO† [of which: #2 PESO larger than Prefectural Capital]	6 [5]	11 [10]	32 [5]
Manager, other PESO [of which: #3 PESO††]	2 [1]	4 [1]	19 [10]
Other HQ post, Prefectural Capital	4	4	11
TOTAL	291	287	267
Of which, moves in expected order	276	268	205
(%)	(94.8)	(93.4)	(76.8)

Key: ESS=Employment Security Section EIS=Employment Insurance Section HQ=Prefectural Headquarters
PESO=Public Employment Security Office

Notes: Excluding Tōkyō and Ōsaka Prefectures. † PESO with the largest population in its service area, excluding the PESO located in the prefectural capital. †† PESO with the second largest population in its service area, excluding the PESO located in the prefectural capital - in nearly all cases, this is the PESO with the third largest service area population in the prefecture concerned.

Source: Wiltshire (1990), p. 44. Data extracted from lists published in *Shokugyō Antei Kōhō*, various issues.

The three most senior posts open to local bureaucrats in each prefecture are, in order of seniority, the branch manager (*jochō*) of the PESO in the prefectural capital, the section chief (*kachō*) of the Employment Insurance Section (hereafter, EIS) within the prefectural headquarters, and the chief manager (*shukan*) of the prefectural Employment

Security Section. Table 5.6 reveals a very close match between the pattern of transfers between these posts and their vertical order: of the 845 transfers (including moves into retirement) shown in the table, only 94 (11.4%) fail to take place in the expected direction. What is particularly interesting, however, is the nature of the exceptions. The highest of these three positions is normally a terminal point in a bureaucratic career. Of the small number of exceptions to this rule, the largest group (5) consists of transfers to other PESOs with one distinguishing characteristic: their service areas have larger populations than those served by the PESO in the prefectural capital. The absolute number of cases is small because there are only seven prefectures in which the population of the prefectural capital's service area is not the largest. What is clear, however, is that the mobility of a person holding this post is determined in part by the particular size distribution of service areas in the prefecture within which he is employed, or in other words, by the structural interlacing of vertical and geographical mobility.

A similar pattern emerges for holders of the second highest position, that of section chief in the EIS. A much smaller proportion of these officials pass directly into retirement, since there is at least one higher post available to them. Otherwise, we again have very few cases in which transfers are not self-evidently upwards, and the largest single group of exceptions (10) consists of transfers to PESOs with larger service areas in population terms than those served by prefectural capital.

For occupants of what is normally the third highest position, chief manager of the ESS, there are rather more cases that appear to be exceptions to the rule of upward mobility. A substantial minority of transfers (51, or 19%) are to PESOs other than those located in prefectural capitals. Of these 51, only a small number are to PESOs with service areas larger than that served by the PESO in the prefectural capital. Instead, the largest single group of transfers (27, or 10% of all transfers) consists of moves to the most important PESO in a prefecture other than that located in the prefectural capital, where the population served is less than that served by the prefectural capital. In addition, of the remaining transfers to PESOs which fall outside this category, the majority are to PESOs that rank third in their prefectures on the basis of population served. We may infer then that the fate of a person holding the post of chief manager in an employment security section is similarly determined in part by the particular size distribution of service areas in the prefecture within which he is employed. This, therefore, is another example of the structural interlacing of vertical and geographical mobility.

The conclusion to be drawn from this evidence is that, in the case of the Ministry of Labour at least, the geographical hierarchy of places and the vertical hierarchy of ranks and posts inside and outside the headquarters are interlaced. Furthermore, this interlacing takes place not just in the narrow sense, i.e. that postings at two adjacent levels in the

vertical hierarchy at headquarters may be separated by a tour of duty through the provinces, but also in a far more general and complex manner, in which equivalence is established between prefectural posts with the same designation and a wide range of headquarters posts, the seniority of which increases along with the size of the settlement against which it is matched. This interlacing even extends to comparisons between non-headquarters posts at different ranks, and it introduces real diversity into mobility patterns, since the points at which "circuit" transfers are terminated by a move back to headquarters will be determined by the particular distribution of settlement sizes to be found in a specific prefecture.

5.3.6 Chains in space: simultaneous transfers

Personnel transfers within the Ministry of Labour are constrained by that organization's vertical structure, by the spatial distribution of its activities, by rigid adherence to a geographical "pecking order" based upon the relative sizes of places, and by labour market segmentation. The analysis presented thus far, which has focused upon those elements of individual careers which involve movements from place to place, suggests that these moves are arranged in such a way that the structural constraints are carefully adhered to.

There is one further constraint to which we have not addressed our attention, however, and that is the necessity of ensuring that the rotation of staff among posts is properly coordinated, such that vacancies are minimized and the Ministry's operations are not disrupted. In practice this is achieved by clustering transfers into a very limited number of days each year, when many individuals relinquish their posts simultaneously and move on to other jobs. In practice, for a high proportion of interprefectural transfers, and for virtually all intraprefectural transfers, these movements take place on just one day: April 1.

In the absence of any hierarchical relationship between posts, the changes required could be achieved by moving everyone the equivalent of one place to the right, as if around a circular table. We have already established, however, that there are strong hierarchical relationships in this Ministry, and therefore transfers must instead line up into simultaneous "chains", with definite beginnings and endings, which snake upwards through the organization's vertical structure and, coincidentally, through geographical space as well.

There are only two ways in which a simultaneous chain can be arranged in a hierarchical context: either someone located in the upper reaches of the organization departs, through retirement, outplacement or some other reason, opening up a vacancy

which is then filled by a former subordinate, and so on down the chain, or else someone must be transferred into a post which may have several occupants simultaneously - in White's terminology a "pool" job - thereby creating the vacancy that is required before the chain can develop. In the case of the Ministry's career bureaucrats the latter form is quite common, since a high proportion of the available posts carry the label "inspector" or its equivalent, the numbers of which are flexible. In the case of intraprefectural transfers, however, most of the posts included in the SAK data set normally have only one occupant, and thus most chains have to begin with a retirement of some type. For example, the 535 intraprefectural transfers recorded in this source for April 1, 1987 fell into 216 separate chains, of which 185 (or 85.7%) could be traced to the retirement of specific individuals (Wiltshire, 1990, p. 41). These retirement-led chains had a mean number of recorded participants of 3.6 (including the retiree himself), which is undoubtedly an underestimate of the true length, since other individuals must have been promoted from lower (and unrecorded) ranks to fill the vacancies in the most junior recorded ranks. As for the chains that did not commence with a retirement, almost all of them were simply reciprocal exchanges between posts located at the same level in the managerial hierarchy.

Table 5.7 An example of a simultaneous chain: Hiroshima Prefecture, April 1 1987

	Old Rank	Section/ Office	Location	New Rank	Section/ Office	Location
1	Section Chief	EIS	Hiroshima (HQ)	Retired	-	-
2	Chief Manager	ESS	Hiroshima (HQ)	Section Chief	EIS	Hiroshima (HQ)
3	Manager	PESO	Mihara	Chief Manager	ESS	Hiroshima (HQ)
4	Manager	PESO	Takehara	Manager	PESO	Mihara
5	Deputy Section Chief	ESS	Hiroshima (HQ)	Manager	PESO	Takehara
6	Inspector	ESS	Hiroshima (HQ)	Deputy Section Chief	ESS	Hiroshima (HQ)
7	Manager	PESO	Miyoshi	Inspector	ESS	Hiroshima (HQ)
8	Deputy Manager	PESO	Hiroshima	Manager	PESO	Miyoshi
9	Manager	PESO	Hiroshima Saijo	Deputy Manager	PESO	Hiroshima
10	Chief Clerk	ESS	Hiroshima (HQ)	Manager	PESO	Hiroshima Saijo

Key: ESS=Employment Security Section
EIS=Employment Insurance Section HQ=Prefectural Headquarters
PESO=Public Employment Security Office

Source: Wiltshire (1990), p. 41. Data extracted from lists published in *Shokugyô Antei Kôhôn*, April 1 1987.

What factors determine the geographical structure of these chains? The answer is a combination of structural constraints, to which we have already devoted much attention, plus what is, in effect, chance. Since every chain is made up of segments of careers which themselves conform to structural constraints, the simultaneous chains of transfers must also conform, such that they always lead from smaller places to larger and from junior posts to senior. The example shown in Table 5.7, which is also taken from Wiltshire (1990, p. 41), is entirely typical, despite its extraordinary length: every transfer in the chain is from a smaller place to a larger one, except for the move from Hiroshima to Miyoshi, which is compensated for by demonstrable promotion, and that from Hiroshima to Takehara, where the Hiroshima postings are essentially an interruption in what would otherwise have been a conventional "circuit" between branch manager posts.

But why these specific places? From the data alone it is impossible to say: we are close to the limits of the inferential approach, and a precise answer can only be obtained by questioning the officials who actually constructed this chain. It would appear, however, that yet another constraint is of relevance here: the fact that most postings last for only one or two years. For example, over the entire 1975-87 period there were 740 instances in which one or another of the three most senior posts in any prefecture (the manager of the PESO in the prefectural capital, the section chief in the employment insurance section, and the chief manager in the employment security section) was vacated and for which the period of occupancy by the departing incumbent was known. Of these postings, 36.2% had been for just one year, a further 49.1% for two years, 11.2% for three years, and only 3.6% for four or more years. In other words, more than half of the officials employed at this level moved each year.

Under these circumstances of very rapid turnover, the number of different chains that could be arranged each April, without contravening the hierarchical constraints, is quite substantial, and gives ample scope for allocating specific individuals to specific jobs, irrespective of the exact location from which each has moved. In each case we must assume that there were positive reasons why a particular option was selected from the range of possible chains. The important point, however, is that over a large number of cases these particularities become indistinct, and are transformed into what is in effect random "noise". As a result, the only patterns which can be identified are those dictated by the underlying structural constraints. It is significant in this context that a search for discrete "pathways" through the lower ranking posts in the SAK data set proved fruitless: although some combinations of origins and destinations were repeated, the extent of this repetition was no more than might be expected by chance, leaving no basis for any prediction of the geography of a particular simultaneous chain, other than that it must conform to known hierarchical rules.

5.3.7 Conclusion: The geography of job rotation in the Ministry of Labour

The materials presented in this case study add up to a picture that closely resembles Yamaguchi's portrait of mobility in the Ministry of Construction, in its coarser brush strokes at least, but also add significantly to our understanding of the geography of job rotation within Japanese bureaucracies, particularly in demonstrating the high degree of precision with which geographical space is structured by such organizations - "hierarchical construction" was the phrase used - and by illuminating some of the complexity of the relationship between horizontal and vertical mobility.

As in Yamaguchi's study, segmentation emerges as a key variable determining mobility patterns. Segmentation involves the division of the Ministry's workforce into non-competing groups, "career" and "non-career" officials, who often bear similar titles derived from an administrative structure that is fractal-like in its replication at successive levels in the bureaucratic hierarchy, but who operate in what are in effect both hierarchically and geographically separate worlds. One result of this segmentation which has been clearly demonstrated in the case study is that different segments of the Ministry's internal labour market are spatially nested, primarily at the prefectural level. This in turn means that transfers between the highest and lowest units of the Ministry's organization (i.e. between the Tōkyō headquarters and local PESOs) are very infrequent, at senior levels at least, an observation which appears to mirror at the scale of an individual organization the low frequency of transfers between very small and very large places observed on a highly aggregated basis in Chapter 4. This correlation is not entirely coincidental, because the nature of the Ministry's work necessitates a close relationship between the structure of its field organization and the underlying distribution of settlements: in effect, there is an administrative hierarchical construction of space that is highly correlated with the distribution of population.

As regards the spatial configuration of job rotation within the Ministry, the results include examples of both "stellar" (or geographically reciprocal) and "circuit" (or spiral) transfers, the balance between these two forms being a function of structural factors, such as the number of PESOs in a particular prefecture, segmentation, which leads for example to career officials pre-empting the most senior headquarters posts at a particular level in the bureaucracy, and policy on mobility, training and career development. This is a difficult area in which to conduct research, with so many variables to consider, but a comparison of mobility at the intraprefectural scale has proved particularly valuable, in that many of the variations due to policy and segmentation could be controlled, within a common organizational framework. The results suggest a higher level of "stellar" mobility than would otherwise be expected, which may in part be the consequence of a

deliberate administrative ploy, but which can also be interpreted as a manifestation of the intricate relationship that exists between horizontal and vertical mobility.

Within a given segment of the internal labour market, the process of mobility can be seen as a trade-off between the vertical separation of administrative ranks and the geographical importance of places: certainly there is very strong evidence that this is true of the Ministry of Labour, and given that the roots of the trade-off lie in the bureaucratic structure itself, it is likely to be true of many other organizations as well. In the case study we have seen this trade-off manifested in two forms, a "ratchet effect" and the more general "structural interlacing of posts". The former may be interpreted as a direct consequence of the construction of space at a particular level in the organizational hierarchy, in which transferees will always move from smaller places to larger ones, until such time as vertical promotion allows the ratchet to slip and a single move to a much smaller place becomes possible again. The broader concept of structural interlacing suggests that the distinction between geographical mobility within internal labour markets and vertical mobility through the organizational hierarchy is entirely artificial, since these two are intimately and inseparably linked.

Strong evidence in support of the latter contention has emerged at both the intraprefectural and interprefectural scales. For example, the analysis of mobility amongst prefectural employment security section chiefs has demonstrated that there is no direct equivalence between this post and any one rank at headquarters. Rather, there is a sliding scale of equivalence running from junior headquarters posts and small prefectures to senior headquarters posts and large prefectures. At the intraprefectural scale, one implication of this interlacing is that patterns of mobility, and in particular the balance between the "stellar" and "circuit" forms, are likely to vary in accordance with the characteristics of the settlement size distribution specific to each prefecture.

The transfers described in this case study are the result of careful planning within the Ministry's personnel sections, and the successful implementation of such a high level of mobility without adverse effects on the actual process or work requires detailed coordination, leading to classic examples of what White (1970) has called "simultaneous chains". The geographical structure of these chains appears to derive from a combination of structural constraints, appraisals of the specific individuals to be rotated, and an element of chance, in that there are often several possible configurations that would satisfy the objective requirements. This demonstrates the limitations which are inherent in the type of research reported here, which has been based upon inference derived from the results of administrative decisions rather than observation of the decision-making process itself. While this has not prevented us from making a number of valuable observations at an aggregate level, it does suggest that a more detailed analysis must await the results of

intimate research on the Ministry's personnel policies and practices, a subject to which we shall return in Chapter 9.

5.4 Summary of Chapter 5

In this Chapter we have reviewed the rather limited range of evidence which exists in the Japanese language literature on the geography of job rotation (or *tenkin* in the narrow sense) in the Japanese civil service and financial sector, before presenting a detailed case study of geographical mobility within the Ministry of Labour. The case study confirmed several of the characteristics of transfer activity already identified in the literature, but added new insights into the degree to which individual places are accorded hierarchical status relative to each other and to particular positions within the Ministry's vertical structure. While the specific destination of a particular transfer may be unpredictable, other than at the most senior of levels (where the options are severely limited), the general pattern of mobility is highly predictable, due to the strength of the underlying structural constraints.

The conclusion that repetitive patterns do emerge from these case study materials is a result of course of the fact that the Ministry of Labour is a comparatively stable organization, in which transfers of managerial personnel take place on what is in effect a routine and programmed basis. Stable managerial hierarchies are the norm across the Japanese economy, for which reason these patterns are quite likely to be repeated elsewhere. Organizational stability is not a prerequisite for personnel transfers however: in the next chapter, we shall see how structural change in a major organization are been facilitated by a variety of internal labour market adjustments, each with its own geographical expression.

Chapter 6 Non-Programmed Transfers: A Case Study of Labour Mobility and Structural Change in the Japanese Steel Industry

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was shown that there can be a strong element of predictability in transfer patterns within stable bureaucratic organizations, based upon the structure of the organization itself and the linkages which exist (particularly in market or urban hierarchy dependent organizations) between the organization and the space economy within which it is located. Every single transfer is a unique element in the evolving career of a specific individual, yet when viewed in aggregate these flows of personnel conform to a simple and repetitive set of rules in what appears almost to be a mechanical or programmed way. This is the world of the Japanese white-collar worker, employed in a large multi-site organization within a rigid system of management, and judging from the data presented in Chapter 4, it is also the most common framework in which personnel transfers take place in Japan.

But it is not the only framework, and these are not the only sort of transferees. Organizations do change, and in the process of change the opportunity or necessity may arise for a redistribution of the workforce - of managers, clerks and production workers alike. Some changes are cyclical, and result in the temporary transfer of labour between activities while slack conditions persist, in a process of adjustment to which reference was also made in Chapter 4. Other changes are of longer duration and mark the structural transformation of the organization itself. While it is clear that personnel transfers may be generated in the process of structural change, it is far less easy to predict what the resulting patterns may be, whether geographical or otherwise, without reference to the specific circumstances of a given organization - and at a particular moment in time. It may make a considerable difference, for example, whether a factory is experiencing secular expansion because of some favourable characteristic, or is undergoing gradual decline. In the former case, young transferees may be drafted in from less favoured sites to man new facilities, while in the latter case we may find a variety of transfer types being employed to thin out employee numbers throughout the age spectrum. The essence of such transfers, however, is that they are generally one-off, non-programmed responses to particular and specific situations.

It follows that a wide-ranging survey of long-term activity in internal labour markets is necessary if one is properly to come to grips with the full range of possible responses to structural change, including the geographical dimension of those responses. Such a large scale project is beyond the scope of the present thesis. Instead, a case study approach has been adopted, not (as in the case of the Ministry of Labour) because it can

easily be generalized to a wide variety of similar situations, but in order to achieve a more modest and realistic target, which is to illustrate how the various types of personnel transfer (as described in Chapter 2) can contribute to the process of structural change, and how (as explained in Chapter 4) transfers form just one component of a whole range of possibilities for labour force adjustment.

The case study is drawn from the postwar Japanese steel industry, the selection of which can be justified on a number of counts. First, unlike the examples given in the previous chapter, which were all drawn from the service and government sectors, steelmaking is part of manufacturing industry, and thus a case study drawn from this sector may illustrate aspects of transfer activity not normally found within purely bureaucratic structures. This is not to say, of course, that steel companies do not have bureaucracies of their own: while a shortage of data prevents us from paying specific attention to it, there is a great deal of career mobility of the *tenkin* variety within each company's administrative divisions, and this often with a strong geographical component. Part of the function of these bureaucracies, however, is to arrange the optimal distribution of the production workforce, the blue-collar workers who provide the second justification for the choice of case study material: the steel industry is a major employer of skilled and semi-skilled labour, of individuals who have been subject to the process of "white-collarization" as described by Koike (1983: see Chapter 2.4 above). The incorporation of these workers into the "lifetime employment system" has created the basis, and indeed the necessity for transfers during the course of structural adjustment in the industry, and has given to employers the powers required to effect such transfers. And while we shall not explore the issue further here, there is also mobility to be taken into account amongst a third group of workers: scientists and technologists. Research staff follow their own career paths between technical institutes and laboratories within individual firms, and can also be the object of large scale permanent transfers whenever such facilities are selectively rationalized or relocated: the recent concentration of Nippon Steel's research functions at the Integrated Technology Centre in Futtsu City (Chiba Prefecture) is a case in point (*Shin Nippon Seitetsu Sokuho*, August 8, 1989, pp. 3-4).

A third justification is that the steel industry is dominated by a small number of very large companies (Nippon Steel, NKK, Kawasaki Steel, Kôbe Steel and Sumitomo Metals), each of which operates production facilities at more than one site. The Nippon Steel Corporation for example, which is the subject of the present case study, is the largest steelmaker in the world, with ten separate production facilities in Japan and important overseas linkages as well. These firms therefore constitute matrices within which large scale transfer activity can take place on an interregional basis. Each of these companies has its unique attributes, of course, which for Nippon Steel include a high level of dependence upon steel sales and production at more sites than any other

manufacturer. There are limits, therefore, in the extent to which one case study can serve to represent conditions in the industry as a whole. Nevertheless, as far as personnel management issues are concerned, each of the largest companies has resorted to a range of transfer types in order to facilitate structural adjustment, and in this respect at least it is reasonable to assume that the case study to be presented here is at least illustrative of practices to be found elsewhere in the industry. Finally, we should note that the major steel firms also control networks of suppliers, subsidiaries and subcontractors, which in turn present the possibility of transfer activity across "intermediate" labour markets within a *keiretsu*.

The most important justification for a case study from the steel industry, however, is that steelmaking in postwar Japan has experienced very mixed fortunes. During the 1960s it was one of the growth sectors that underpinned the Japanese "economic miracle", but from the mid 1970s onwards it experienced repeated bouts of structural recession, stagnation of output and sharp reductions in employment, despite rising productivity and heavy investment in modernization and streamlining. In other words, a single case study drawn from this industry can give insights into transfer activity caused not only by growth and expansion but also by retrenchment. This is not to say that the steel industry is unique in this regard: the shipbuilding industry presents obvious parallels, along with the immense restructuring of the aluminium refining industry over the past twenty years. Nor are the experiences of the steel industry necessarily likely to be representative of other important sectors of manufacturing with very different postwar histories, such as motor vehicles production and electronics. Nevertheless, for the sheer scale of the structural transformation it has undergone, and the range of possibilities for internal mobility which have thereby been opened up, the steel industry is probably the single most important sector of manufacturing from which a case study could be drawn.

Much of the case study material is taken from papers on the Nippon Steel Corporation's Kamaishi Steelworks published by Wiltshire (1991, 1992), which incorporate the results of field work undertaken by the author in Japan during April and May of 1990, field work that was in turn based upon an earlier paper by Sargent and Wiltshire (1988). An attempt has been made to broaden the context within which the case study is set, however, both by expanding upon the general situation faced by the steel industry as a whole during the postwar period, as in Section 6.2.1 below, and in more detail, by providing examples of parallel developments in other parts of the same company, particularly during the 1980s, when the full range of transfer options was finally exploited.

6.2 Background to the case study

6.2.1 Geographical perspective on the postwar Japanese steel industry

The history of the Japanese steel industry since 1945 has been marked not only by a remarkable swing in fortunes but also by pronounced geographical changes. The location pattern inherited from the prewar era was strongly influenced by the traditional resource-orientation of the industry. As Yamamoto and Murakami (1980) point out, the earliest modern iron works were constructed in places accessible to domestic raw materials - at Kamaishi in Northern Honshû, the site of what was at one time Japan's largest iron ore mine, and within easy reach of Hokkaidô coal, at Yahata (or Yawata) in Kyûshû (now part of Kitakyûshû City), close by the Chikuhô coalfield, which commenced iron production in 1901, and on Hokkaidô at Muroran, where production began in 1907. After World War I, however, new facilities tended to be constructed not at raw material sites but rather within the main regions of consumption, i.e. in the Tôkyô and Ôsaka areas. The major reason for this shift, beyond ease of access to consumers, was the declining relative importance of domestic raw materials, which were limited in both quantity and quality, relative to imports from China, Malaya, the Philippines and beyond.

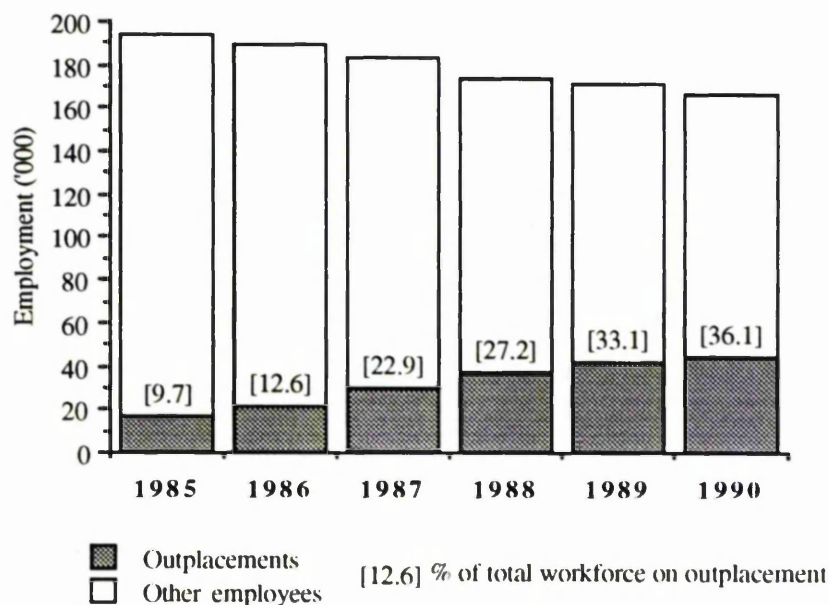
In the immediate postwar years the earlier generation of production locations played a vital role in Japan's economic recovery, but by the 1950s the trend towards concentration in close proximity to the market was renewed vigorously, such that the older, resource-oriented locations were increasingly marginalized and run down. Government-sponsored rationalization schemes led to the replacement of obsolete installations by larger and more up-to-date ones, and typically these new plants were located within the largest metropolitan regions, either on existing sites or along the shoreline for ease of access to raw materials. A total of eight new large-scale integrated steelworks were constructed during the boom decade of the 1960s, and as Yamamoto and Murakami (1980) point out, all were sited on reclaimed land along the coast within the Pacific Coast Belt. In part this represented a continuation of the prewar market-oriented location pattern, but the tidewater location factor was of equal importance. In effect, in an era of cheap ocean transportation the port became the point of raw material supply, and there were substantial economies to be derived from locating at it. There were also advantages in coastal locations from the standpoint of ease of access to export markets, which Japan also entered on a large scale during the 1960s.

Yamamoto and Murakami suggest that the location of new plants during the 1960s was also heavily influenced by a pattern of "location matching" behaviour amongst the major producers. Those firms which began the 1960s with plants located primarily in

eastern markets, such as Fuji Steel (at Kamaishi and Muroran), built new facilities in the western Japan to enhance their competitive position there, (in Fuji Steel's case, at Nagoya and Ôita), while western firms used the opportunity afforded by new investment to enhance their position in eastern markets - hence Yawata Steel's expansion into Sakai (Ôsaka Prefecture) and Kimitsu (Chiba Prefecture, near Tôkyô).

The construction of these new facilities created a major demand for experienced workers at new locations, a demand which each company met in part by transferring workers in on a permanent basis (*haichi tenkan*) from older plants. Information on the scale of such transfers forms an integral part of the case study which follows. The point to be made here, however, is that the geography of these transfers was inevitably constrained by the location pattern inherited by each company.

Figure 6.1 Outplacements (*shukkô*) within the workforce of Japan's five largest steelmakers, 1985-90



Source: Calculated from data in Nippon Tekkô Renmei (1990, p. 67) and *Tekkô Shimbun*, November 27, 1990, p.1.

The worldwide recession which began in the early 1970s brought an end to the Japanese steel industry's headlong growth. The first of a new series of industry-wide rationalizations, which have continued to the present day, saw capacity reductions and threats to the viability of entire locations, especially smaller, peripheral and congested sites such as Kamaishi and Muroran. Although Japan has remained a major steel producer, the depressed world market, trade and exchange rate problems, and in particular, the emergence of even more efficient producers in developing countries (especially Korea), have caused production to stagnate, and when coupled with rapid

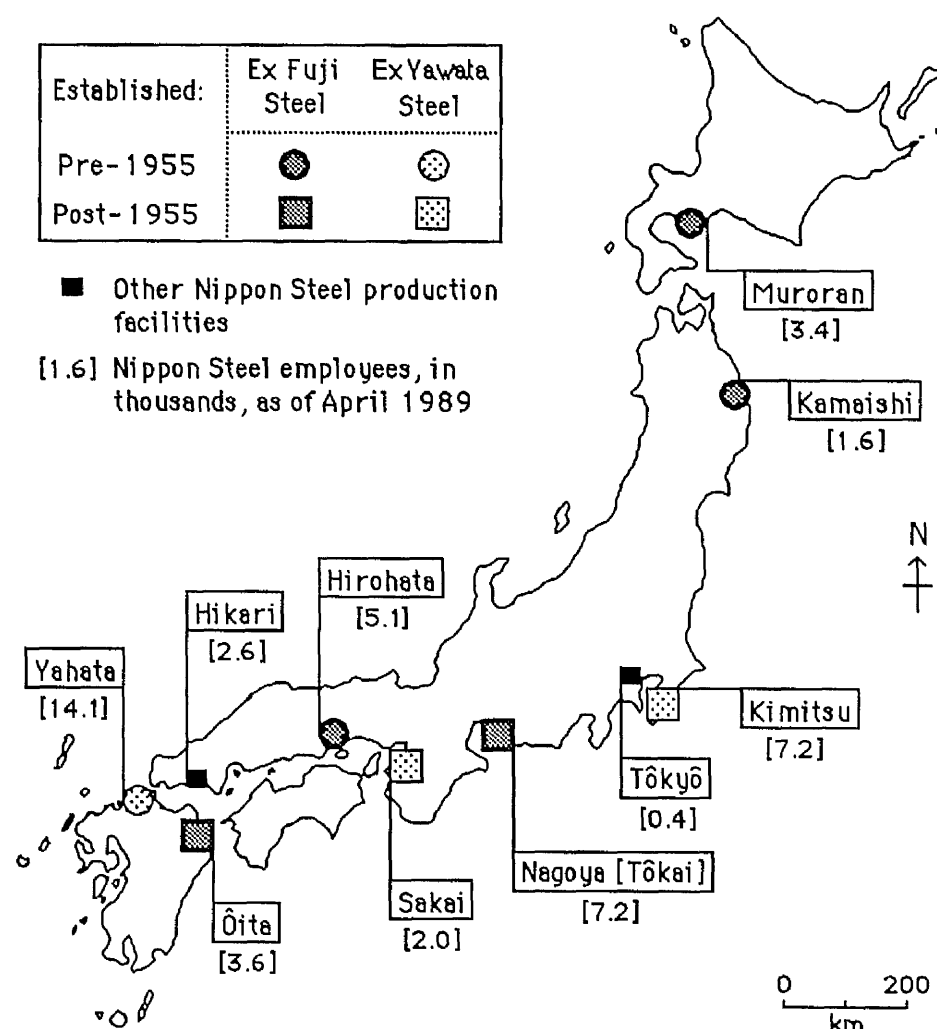
advances in productivity this has led in turn to a rapid drop in steelmaking employment. Thus between 1980 and 1989 combined blue-collar employment within Japan's five largest steelmaking firms fell from 194,000 to 135,000, although the nation's crude steel output fell only marginally over the same period, from 111.4 m tons per annum to 107.9 m tons (Nippon Steel Corporation, 1991, pp. 116, 124). Faced with continuing difficulties in traditional markets at home and abroad, Japan's major steelmakers also responded by shifting production overseas, particularly through joint ventures with some of the major American producers and, of greater importance in the present context, by diversifying within the domestic market into a wide range of alternative and more profitable activities, and by spinning off existing production lines into wholly owned subsidiaries. One result of the latter responses has been a sharp rise in the proportion of the labour force nominally employed by the major steel firms which is actually on outplacement (*shukkkô*) at any one time: as Figure 6.1 demonstrates, the proportion of permanent employees in the big five steelmakers who were on outplacement rose from less than a tenth in 1985 to over a third by 1990.

6.2.2 The Nippon Steel Corporation

Nippon Steel, the company featured in the case study, is the world's largest steelmaker, having produced 29.0 million tons of crude steel in FY 1990, 16.7 million tons more than its nearest domestic rival, NKK (Nippon Steel Corporation, 1991, p. 24). The (new) Nippon Steel Corporation (*Shin Nippon Seitetsu*) was created in 1970 through the merger of Fuji Steel and Yawata Steel, which were themselves the product of the enforced breakup of the original Nippon Steel Corporation after the Pacific War. As can be seen from Figure 6.2, Fuji Steel's traditional strength had been in eastern Japan, with production centred on the steelworks at Kamaishi and Muroran (the Hirohata works opened much later, in 1939), while Yawata Steel had inherited the important and equally long-standing facilities in Northern Kyûshû. Like the other major producers, Fuji Steel and Yawata Steel expanded rapidly during the 1960s, through new investments located on greenfield tidewater sites located within the Pacific Coast Belt. Yawata Steel constructed a new steelworks at Sakai outside Ôsaka, followed by a much larger project giving it access to the market in eastern Japan and located at Kimitsu, on Tôkyô Bay. Similarly, Fuji Steel masterminded the construction of large new facilities at a site just south of Nagoya, through an affiliate called Tôkai Steel which it subsequently took over, and at Ôita at the western end of the Inland Sea. During the 1960s, the main streams of personnel transfers within these two firms were those of key personnel moving from older sites to newer ones to facilitate the commissioning process, and they took place on a massive scale: as we shall see later, for example, a total of 1,683 workers were transferred to Nagoya in the 1960s from Kamaishi, representing a migration flow (including dependents) of around 5,000 people, while according to Kamata (1985, p.

231) a total of 2,115 permanent employees were transferred from Yahata to the Kimitsu Works between 1964 and 1968 alone, to be followed by as many again over the subsequent decade. In this respect Nippon Steel's two predecessors acted no differently from the other major steelmaking companies: according to Shibata (1979) for example, by 1971 large numbers of workers has been transferred to Sumitomo Metal's new Kashima Works east of Tôkyô from the older facilities at Wakayama (1,493 transferees), Kokura (284) and Amagasaki (160), while the construction of Nippon Kôkan's massive steelworks at Fukuyama in Hiroshima Prefecture (which was opened in 1966) resulted in the transfer of 2,226 employees, most of whom came from the company's other production facility, the Keihin works in Kanagawa Prefecture.

Figure 6.2 Nippon Steel Corporation: Main sites, January 1989



Note: In addition to the production facilities shown on the map, the company maintained research laboratories in Kanagawa Prefecture (west of Tôkyô) and at Yahata, and regional marketing offices in each of the main provincial cities.

Source: Wiltshire (1992), Figure 2: Employment data from Tekkô Rôren (1989, pp. 10-11).

After the merger between Yawata Steel and Fuji Steel, the scope for internal transfer activity naturally broadened, as new potential destinations opened up for former employees of one company in the facilities of the other, a phenomenon that will be

illustrated in detail in a later section. Within a few years of the merger, however, the prospects for the new company had been totally transformed by the first oil crisis and the subsequent recession, which marked the beginning of a long process of structural adjustment which has continued through to the present day.

Table 6.1 Proposed permanent transfers of blue-collar personnel under Nippon Steel's Third Rationalization Plan (1984) and Fourth Rationalization Plan (1987)

	DESTINATION				
	Kimitsu	Nagoya	Ôita	Research Centres	[TOTAL]
ORIGIN					
Kamaishi					
1984	15	5	-	10	[30]
1987	200	50	-	-	[250]
Muroran					
1984	220	100	35	25	[380]
1987	500	70	80	-	[650]
Hirohata					
1984	-	35	70	10	[115]
1987	150	200	150	-	[500]
Sakai					
1984	90	45	80	15	[230]
1987	50	30	20	-	[100]
Hikari					
1984	25	-	-	10	[35]
1987	-	-	-	-	[-]
TOTAL					
[1984]	[350]	[185]	[185]	[70]	[790]
[1987]	[900]	[350]	[250]	[-]	[1500]

Source: Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo (1986, 1990a).

Nippon Steel's policies for adapting to changed economic circumstances were encapsulated in a series of four "rationalization plans" that were implemented during the late 1970s and 1980s. In geographical terms, the main thrust of these policies has been to concentrate production of iron and steel at the three most modern and efficient plants, at

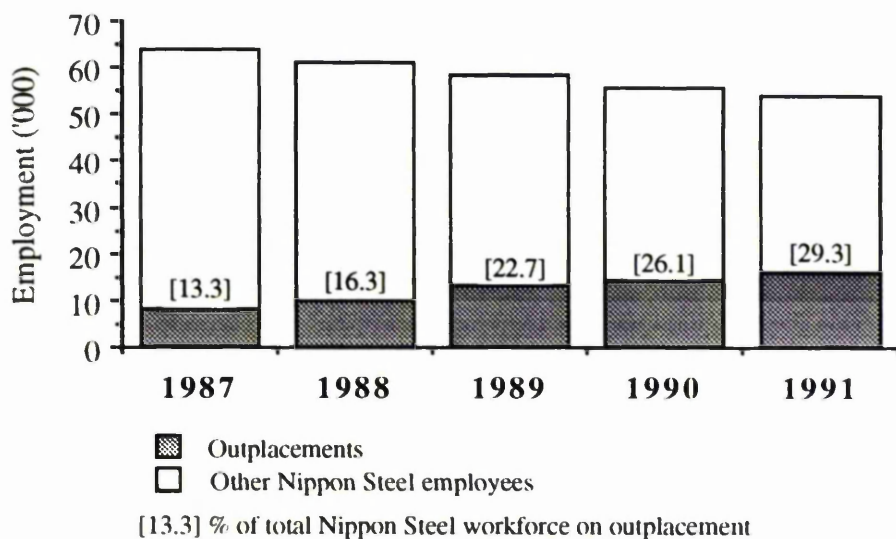
Kimitsu, Nagoya and Ôita, while closing blast furnaces and related steelmaking facilities at each of the other factories. Single blast furnaces at Yahata, Muroran and Hirohata were still in operation at the end of 1990, despite earlier closure plans, but ironmaking had by then ceased entirely at the Sakai Works and at Kamaishi. With each rationalization plan and subsequent round of plant closures, a new wave of permanent transfers of blue-collar workers was triggered, bringing workers from the declining facilities into the three main centres of production. Matrices of such flows as proposed under the Third and Fourth Rationalization Plans, for example, are shown in Table 6.1. Over time, however, the company found it increasingly difficult to absorb the influx productively even at the newest steelworks, and it was forced to develop alternative employment opportunities at Kimitsu, Nagoya and Ôita for the existing workforce at the same time as moving in surplus workers from elsewhere. As a result, there has been a very rapid increase (as in the steel industry as a whole) in the proportion of workers who are on outplacement at any given time (Figure 6.3), and while some of these workers have undoubtedly moved into new enterprise fields which have outstanding prospects for growth, many others are engaged in what are effectively make-work projects, aimed particularly at older workers who are approaching retirement.

6.2.3 The Kamaishi Steelworks

Of all Nippon Steel's facilities, Kamaishi has long been inherently the most vulnerable, and this largely for geographical reasons. The initial factors accounting for the establishment of Japan's first western-style ironmaking industry in Kamaishi in the mid-nineteenth century were largely physical - there were excellent supplies of charcoal in the surrounding hills, and more important, Japan's richest source of magnetite ore was located nearby. This iron ore, together with coal shipped in from Hokkaidô, formed a secure basis for steelmaking until the mid-1950s, but thereafter the industry's input structure changed radically, and very much to Kamaishi's disadvantage. Cheap imported iron ores and coal undermined the economics of domestic production, while the search for economies of scale exposed the inadequacies of the Kamaishi site, which while enjoying access to tidewater already occupied much of the land available in what is a narrow and extremely congested valley, leaving little space for further expansion. More than anything else, however, it is Kamaishi's remoteness from centres of demand which has counted against it, a remoteness that is reinforced by poor overland links. The city is isolated from interior northern Honshû by the broad mass of the Kitakami Highlands - access to the arterial Tôhoku motorway and to the Tôkyô-Morioka *shinkansen* railway line involves a two and a half hour journey by car over narrow and twisting roads, or a long slow train journey via Hanamaki, 90 km to the west. Not surprisingly, few industries other than those directly related to steelmaking have found this location attractive, and hence Kamaishi has long been a one-industry, one-firm "company town"

(*kigyô jôkamachi*), dominated by the Nippon Steel Corporation (Sargent and Wiltshire, 1988, p. 354).

Figure 6.3 Outplacements (*shukkô*) within Nippon Steel's workforce, 1987-1991



Source: Wiltshire (1992), Figure 8: Data from *Kinzoku Tokuhô*, May 15, 1991.

Although Kamaishi's eventual demise as a significant steelmaking centre had long been in prospect, the actual mechanism of this decline was determined by organizational perceptions of, and responses to, these fundamental geographical weaknesses, in the context of the company's overall position at any one time, and thus in response also to changes taking place elsewhere in the company's operations. The case study therefore attempts to illustrate the role that personnel transfers of various types have played in the evolving history of this particular steelworks, but within a wider and strongly interregional corporate framework.

The case study proper begins in the early 1960s, when Nippon Steel's predecessor in Kamaishi (Fuji Steel) was experiencing rapid expansion and investing heavily in new production facilities elsewhere in Japan. The stage for what subsequently happened had already been set, however, during the 1950s. Ironically, Kamaishi was the first of Fuji Steel's plants to attract major investment in the immediate postwar years, thanks to the Korean War boom, but as Kitamura (1982, p. 100) notes, by the late 1950s most of the company's new investment was going to Muroran and Hirohata instead. Lack of investment eventually rendered many of the operations at Kamaishi unprofitable, because the steelworks was saddled with technology that rapidly became obsolete. Investment did continue in upgrading the blast furnaces and steelmaking facilities, particularly in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but the gains made were quickly outweighed by the inherent

economic disadvantages of small-scale production. Kamaishi was further disadvantaged by the shift of consumer demand away from its traditional specialization in rolled products in favour of sheet steels, and by the late 1980s the facilities had been reduced to a single wire mill, producing high quality wire for radial tyres. Nippon Steel has installed the very latest machinery in this mill, giving Kamaishi a technological advantage in one small area of steel manufacturing, yet over the long term the survival of even this facility must be in doubt, since the raw materials have to be shipped in from the Kimitsu Works, 470 km to the south (Sargent and Wiltshire, 1988, p. 356), there are no major markets nearby, and the production technology is entirely footloose.

The first signs of the decline to come emerged in 1954, when Fuji Steel declared some sixty workers at Kamaishi surplus to requirements, of whom thirty were transferred permanently to the Hirohata Works. Four years later the company closed Kamaishi's thin plate mill, because it had been rendered obsolete within just eight years of its construction by newer mills at Hirohata and Muroran. As a result another thirty permanent transfers to Hirohata took place (Tanosaki, 1985, pp. 116-117). The impact of closures was compounded over subsequent years by the effects of selective modernization of the remaining facilities: technological improvements led to the substitution of capital for labour, further increasing the pressure to redeploy labour elsewhere. These early closures also established an important precedent in another respect, in that the company's union displayed a compliant attitude towards the resulting transfers, which were seen as an alternative preferable to redundancies (Kamata, 1987, p. 28). The union has generally adhered to this view ever since, and although it has formally been consulted through an established negotiating machinery each time transfers have been proposed, its effective role in modifying either the volume or direction of subsequent interregional flows of labour appears to have been extremely limited.

Taken together, these sixty transferees were the first representatives of a migration stream which has continued flowing to the present day. Their numbers were dwarfed, however, by the exodus which was to follow over the next three decades: between 1960 and 1990, over 2,300 employees of Nippon Steel and its predecessors were permanently transferred from Kamaishi to other sites operated by the company, not counting those who experienced transfers to other companies or of a temporary nature. The end for local steelmaking eventually arrived on March 25, 1989, when the last blast furnace and steelmaking facilities in Kamaishi were shut down. In the case study to which we now turn, we will examine how the final demise of steelmaking in Kamaishi came about, and how the company deployed transfers and other adjustment mechanisms to manage the association reduction in the workforce.

6.3 Personnel transfers and labour force adjustment at the Kamaishi Steelworks, 1960-1990

6.3.1 Transfers from Kamaishi in the 1960s

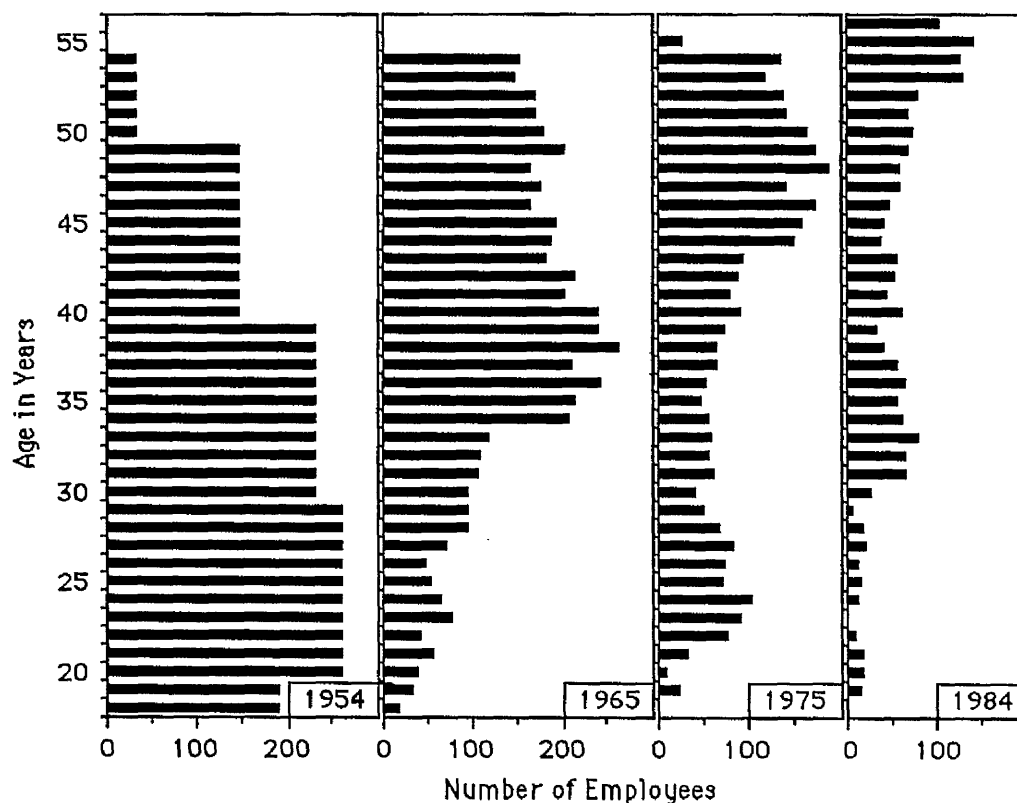
During the 1960s personnel management at the Kamaishi Works was dominated by two considerations: the need to manage the contraction of the workforce at an unprofitable location, and the demand for key workers at the new Tōkai Steelworks on the outskirts of Nagoya. The ready availability of alternative employment opportunities elsewhere provided an obvious solution to the problem of contraction, and an attractive one for younger employees, given the prospect of rapid career advancement at the newer facility. As a result, between 1963 and 1970 a total of 1,683 workers (including a few managerial staff, but mostly blue-collar production workers employed by Fuji Steel) were transferred permanently from Kamaishi to what was until 1967 the Tōkai Steelworks (nominally an independent company), and subsequently the Nagoya Works of Fuji Steel. Many of these transferees had families who moved with them, generating a total population exodus from Kamaishi of around 5,000 people - to whom should be added an unknown number of workers and dependents simultaneously transferred to Nagoya by various local subsidiaries of Fuji Steel. Although other peripheral facilities also acted as sources of labour for the Tōkai Works, workers from Kamaishi captured the lion's share of the new jobs: according to official company data reported in Tanosaki (1985, pp. 323-324), of the 3,685 permanent employees of Fuji Steel transferred into Nagoya over the 1962-70 period, 45.5% came from Kamaishi, as compared with 26.4% from Hirohata and 24.6% from Muroran.

These mass transfers were carefully coordinated not only with the demand for labour at Nagoya but also with the closure of unwanted facilities at Kamaishi. In September 1963, for example, the first in a new series of closures at Kamaishi was announced, together with a reduction of around 1,500 in the permanent blue-collar workforce, to be achieved by 900 transfers to Tōkai and around 600 full term retirements and natural wastage. Additional measures implemented at the time included an expansion in subcontracting and a local hiring freeze (Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo, 1986, pp. 213-4).

During the 1960s then, Fuji Steel was able to manage the dual problems of surplus employment at Kamaishi and labour demand at Nagoya by means of simple and permanent internal transfers of labour from one location to the other. Overall, the expansion of aggregate demand for steel products over this period ensured that adequate employment opportunities could be maintained within the company, despite rising labour productivity, such that the existing workforce could be accommodated without resort to short term transfers or any major off-loading of surplus workers onto subcontractors. In

the 1970s, however, the situation deteriorated rapidly, and management practices changed radically in response.

Figure 6.4 Age profiles of the permanent blue-collar workforce (*gijutsushoku shain*) at the Kamaishi Steelworks



Source: Wiltshire (1992), Figure 4: Modified from Tanosaki (1985).

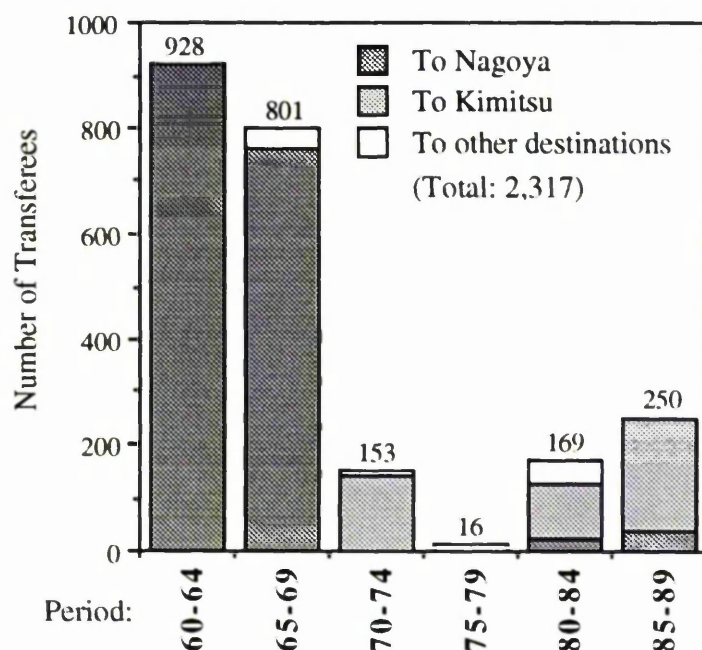
The mass transfers and related employment countermeasures did have one important long term implication for the management of employment decline at the Kamaishi Works, however. Although precise data are not available, it is clear that the individuals who were transferred to Nagoya were overwhelmingly concentrated amongst the younger age groups, with the result that a marked shift took place in the age structure of the workforce that remained behind (Figure 6.4). This in turn made it possible to rely upon retirements rather than transfers as the main method of labour force adjustment over the following two decades. Transfers did continue, however, and soon multiplied in form.

6.3.2 Transfers from Kamaishi in the 1970s and 1980s

The 1970s brought two important changes to the pattern of transfers out of Kamaishi. The first change was made possible by the merger of Fuji Steel and Yahata Steel in 1970, which had two implications. First, the number of possible destinations for transfers from Kamaishi increased sharply, to include the sites inherited by the new company from Yahata Steel. Second, the number of sites from which labour was being shed, and which

were therefore in competition with Kamaishi for the supply of alternative jobs elsewhere, also increased. The result, as shown in Fig. 5.5, was a shift in the primary destination of permanent transfers of blue-collar workers to the newer Kimitsu Works rather than to Nagoya.

Figure 6.5 Permanent transfers (*haichi tenkan*) of Fuji Steel and Nippon Steel employees from the Kamaishi Steelworks, by destination, 1960-89



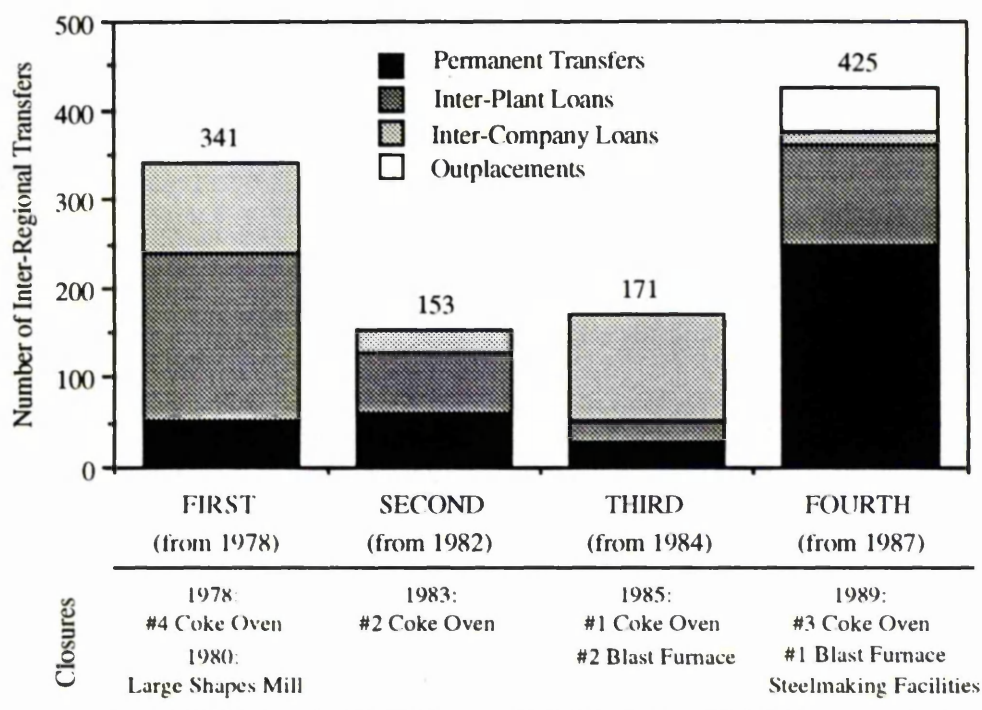
Note: The data for the 1960-69 period include both white-collar and blue-collar workers; the data for 1970-89 include only blue-collar workers. Sources: Wiltshire (1992), Figure 5; Data from Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo (1986, 1990c).

The second change in the pattern of transfers was caused by the rapid deterioration in the fortunes of the steel industry which began in the early 1970s. With the stimulus of rapid expansion in demand removed, Nippon Steel shifted its investment expenditures away from steel capacity expansion and towards cost reduction, new products and, eventually, fields other than steel. The result was a drastic reduction in the flow of new employment opportunities even at the more favoured sites within the company, with no compensating reduction in the pressure on staffing levels at older sites such as Kamaishi. This in turn caused a reduction in the number of permanent interregional transfers that could be sustained, and forced the company to explore alternatives.

As noted earlier, the company's response to these changed circumstances was embodied in a series of four rationalization plans which focused the core of its steelmaking activities at Kimitsu, Nagoya and Ôita, at the expense of its other steelworks. A summary of the major facilities closures implemented at the Kamaishi Works under

these rationalization plans is given in Fig. 6.6, together with information on interregional transfers generated under each plan. It is clear that while the overall volume of transfers dropped away significantly as compared with the 1960s, the range of transfer types put into operation was simultaneously broadened to include the full range of possibilities for the first time.

Figure 6.6 Closures of major facilities at the Kamaishi Steelworks and associated interregional transfers under Nippon Steel's rationalization plans



Note: Transfers data exclude administrative workers and managers, and no data are available for outplacements over the period 1978-86.

Sources: Wiltshire (1992), Figure 6: Based on data in Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo (1986, 1990c) and Yamakawa (1990).

Short term loans, for example, began under the First Rationalization Plan in 1980. Temporary loans of workers to other Nippon Steel facilities, for periods of from three to six months, and to other companies altogether, typically for three months, provided a means for the management at Kamaishi to keep otherwise idle workers occupied, and to avoid more drastic steps. These transfers were dressed up as a valuable opportunity for those affected to expand work experience and to appreciate customers' needs at first hand, while the compensatory payments made by other firms for the labour they had been loaned were a welcome alternative to the losses that would otherwise flow from layoff or redundancy payments. Vacancies created during the absence of these loaned workers by the retirement of others made it possible to reabsorb them into the Kamaishi workforce on their return.

Table 6.2 Loans of Nippon Steel blue-collar personnel from Kamaishi to other Nippon Steel facilities (*shokan ôen*), 1978-1986

FY	Persons	Destination	Period
1980	77	Sakai Steelworks	1/7/80 - 31/12/80 (36) 1/12/80 - 30/6/81 (41)
	17	Kimitsu Steelworks	25/5/80 - 30/9/80
	5	Tôkyô Fabrication Works	1/9/80 - 28/2/81
1981	70	Kimitsu Steelworks	1/4/81 - 30/6/81
	20	Tôkyô Fabrication Works	23/2/81 - 31/8/81 (5) 1/8/81 - 31/7/82 (15)
	1	Basic Research Institute	1/4/81 - 30/9/81
1982	30	Kimitsu Steelworks	7/7/82 - 31/10/82
	21	Tôkyô Fabrication Works	30/8/82 - 31/3/83
1983	17	Tôkyô Fabrication Works	14/3/83-30/9/83
1984	5	Kimitsu Steelworks	1/10/84 - 31/3/85
1985	16	Tôkyô Fabrication Works	20/9/85 - 31/3/86

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the numbers of workers loaned during each period when sent in more than one group.

Source: Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo (1986), p. 921.

Table 6.2 shows that most loans of workers to other Nippon Steel plants (ie. *shokan ôen*) under the First Rationalization Plan were to Kimitsu and the former Yahata Steel plant at Sakai. Under the next two plans, fewer transfers of this type were implemented, and those mainly to Kimitsu. This was to be expected: by the 1980s even the company's newest facilities were shedding labour as rapidly as possible, through natural wastage and long term outplacements to subsidiaries and indeed to any company (however small) that would take people off Nippon Steel's hands.

While Nippon Steel experienced increasing difficulty in reallocating workers internally however, it faced better prospects externally, not just through long term outplacements to what were on occasion somewhat reluctant subsidiaries, but also to firms in other industries which were enjoying rapid growth and paying for it through labour shortages. Table 6.3 shows that the first loan of blue-collar workers to another company (ie. *shagai haken*) took place in 1978, when 100 workers were dispatched for a few months to an Isuzu Motors factory in Fujisawa City (Kanagawa Prefecture), establishing the first in a series of links between the Kamaishi Works and the automobile industry. Under subsequent plans more workers were loaned to Isuzu, Toyota Motors (itself a major customer of Nippon Steel), Daihatsu Motors and Aichi Machinery, mostly at plants located in the Nagoya area. By the Third Rationalization Plan transfers of this

type were accounting for more than two-thirds of interregional movements amongst the Kamaishi workforce (Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo, 1986, p. 336).

Table 6.3 Loans of Nippon Steel blue-collar personnel from Kamaishi to other companies (*shagai haken*), 1978-1986

FY	Persons	Destination	Period
1978	100	Isuzu Motors	23/2/78 - 29/7/78 (40) 7/8/78 - 28/12/78 (30) 8/1/79 - 28/4/79 (30)
1983	10	Isuzu Motors	8/8/83 - 29/10/83
	15	Daihatsu Industries	25/1/84 - 30/4/84
1984	15	Toyota Motors	10/5/84 - 29/7/84
1985	40	Toyota Motor Bodies	8/5/85 - 10/8/85 (20) 1/9/85 - 30/11/85 (20)
	60	Toyota Motors	7/10/85 - 27/12/85 (30) 6/1/86 - 38/3/86 (30)
	20	Aichi Machinery	1/12/85 - 31/3/86

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the numbers of workers loaned during each period when sent in more than one group.

Source: Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo (1986), p. 921.

Nippon Steel's predecessor in Kamaishi may have experienced comparatively little difficulty in obtaining volunteers for permanent transfer in the optimistic and expansionary environment of the 1960s, but in the 1970s and 1980s such volunteers became progressively harder to find. In part the company's difficulties were caused by a shortage of employment opportunities elsewhere, as already explained, but there was another factor. With each round of rationalizations, the residual workforce at Kamaishi became less geographically mobile, for two main reasons. First, within any particular age group, earlier rounds of recruitment drained away those who had a personal preference for living elsewhere, for whatever reason, or whom the company particularly wished to relocate. Second, the increasing average age of the workforce had its own effect, not just because older workers were more likely to have children of school age whose education would have suffered through the move (for which see Chapter 8 below), but also because older workers were far more likely to be home owners, an issues to which we shall return in Chapter 7.

The Third Rationalization Plan also saw the beginnings of a new type of response from Nippon Steel to the problem of surplus workers: the founding of new enterprises with a specific job creation function (Wiltshire, 1991). In Kamaishi this took the form of

two ventures established in 1985 within disused buildings on the steelworks site, one to grow edible fungi, the other to manufacture disposable pocket heaters. These enterprises marked a recognition on the company's part that interregional mobility alone could not solve the employment problem, and also that it would have to play a more active role itself in the creation of alternative employment opportunities, not just because of the city's inability to attract much inward investment in the early 1980s, but also because the scope for dumping surplus employees on local subsidiaries through outplacements was so limited. Kamaishi is the archetypal Japanese "company town", and as the steelworks declined so most other forms of economic activity ran down with it. Under these circumstances, the company had little choice but to become involved in employment creation projects of its own, and subsequently in wider regional development efforts, if it was to live up to its commitments under the lifetime employment system, a trend which was greatly reinforced under the subsequent Fourth Rationalization Plan.

6.3.3 The Fourth Rationalization Plan: Transfers and alternatives

The structural recession in the Japanese steel industry intensified with the rapid rise in the value of the yen from the autumn of 1985, and triggered another round of major rationalizations amongst the leading producers. Nippon Steel announced its own Fourth Rationalization Plan in early 1987, which called for a 30% cut in steelmaking capacity, based on a reduction in the number of blast furnaces in operation from 12 to 8, with the complete shutdown of iron making at Kamaishi, Muroran, Sakai and Hirohata. The workforce would be slimmed down by 19,000, from a 1986 total of 65,000 to 46,000 by 1991 (Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo, 1990a). In addition, the company proposed another round of permanent transfers between plants, including more transfers from Kamaishi (see Table 6.1).

Underlying this plan was a major shift in Nippon Steel's basic corporate strategy. Previously it had seen itself primarily as a steel manufacturer; now it was to diversify into new ventures which would reduce the share of company sales derived from steel from over 80% in 1986 to just 50% by 1995. These new ventures have either been established as independent subsidiaries or nurtured to the point where are spun off under separate management. Each employs workers of two kinds: Nippon Steel employees who have been outplaced (*shukkô*), supposedly on a temporary basis, and so-called "proper" company employees who have been hired directly by the new subsidiaries, and who have no direct employment relationship with Nippon Steel. The distinction is significant in the present context, because the outplaced workers represent an extension of Nippon Steel's internal labour market, while the "proper" employees are excluded from that market, and thus from the possibility of interregional transfers, until such time as the subsidiary concerned establishes its own interregional branch network.

The implications of the Fourth Rationalization Plan for Kamaishi were severe. Production of iron was to end completely, reducing the Works to a single wire mill supplied with billets shipped from Kimitsu. The wire mill would absorb only 270 permanent Nippon Steel production workers, compared with a total permanent production workforce within the Kamaishi compound of 1,670 as of December 1987. The problem now facing the company was what to do with the remaining employees.

Table 6.4 Nippon Steel's workforce at the Kamaishi Steelworks, 1987-1990

	December 31, 1987 (A)	January 1, 1990 (B)	(A - B)	Notes
Total personnel (<i>zaiseki jinin</i>)	2,220	1,500	-720	
of whom:				
A) Administrative (<i>shumushoku</i>)	550	380	-170	
B) Production (<i>gijutsushoku</i>)	1,670	1,120	-550	250 through permanent transfers, plus 300 retirements
of whom:				
1) Steel Division	950	270	-680	
2) New Enterprise Division	210	400	+190	
3) Other Activities	510	450	-60	
of whom:				
Outplacements (<i>shukkô</i>)		135		
of whom:				
Local companies		85		
Non-local companies		50		10 in Tôhoku 40 in Kantô
Inter-plant loans (<i>shokan ôen</i>)		110		90 in Muroran 20 elsewhere
Inter-company loans (<i>shagai haken</i>)		15		10 at Nissan Diesel 5 elsewhere
Scrapping redundant equipment		50		
Environmental improvement		20		
Preparation for retirement		20		
Other		100		

Note: Data were published in the original source rounded to the nearest five.

Source: Wiltshire (1992), Table II: Based on data in Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo (1990b).

The solution it has pursued is shown in Table 6.4. Between December 31, 1987 and January 1, 1990 the blue-collar workforce was reduced by a total of 550, of whom 300 retired (mostly at or around the normal retirement age), and 250 participated in permanent

transfers elsewhere. In addition, 170 jobs were cut in administration, the great majority of the staff concerned being outplaced to new enterprises set up within the Kamaishi Steelworks compound, the remainder being rotated to jobs at other Nippon Steel facilities without being replaced: a case of *tenkin* in the narrow sense being used as an agent of structural change. It would appear that Nippon Steel experienced difficulty in obtaining 250 volunteers for permanent transfers from Kamaishi, however, as might be expected given the top heavy age structure of the workforce. Once again, the major sticking point proved to be housing, for reasons that will be addressed in detail in Chapter 6.

In any event, retirements and permanent transfers could be used to accommodate only part of the necessary reduction in steel-related employment at Kamaishi. Table 6.4 shows that most of the remaining adjustment required under the Plan was achieved through a combination of expansion of employment in "new enterprises" and the implementation of other forms of interregional and/or inter-firm mobility.

The emphasis on diversification has led to the creation of more than forty new enterprises in six "new enterprise fields", ranging in size from small units still managed by Nippon Steel, to large ventures (including branch plants of established companies), which have been enticed to locate in Kamaishi by the prospect of vacant sites within the Works compound and ample supplies of labour. In addition, Nippon Steel's cooperation has given a significant boost to Kamaishi City's own efforts (along with the Prefectural Government and various Ministries) to attract inward investment in recent years. The characteristics of these new enterprises have been examined in detail elsewhere (Wiltshire, 1991), and will not be elaborated upon here, save for two points that are of particular relevance to the present discussion.

First, many of the new enterprises have been set up with the explicit purpose of providing short term employment opportunities for otherwise redundant steel workers and former managers. Examples include NBP Tôhoku, which produces a reconstituted soy protein meat substitute, Finetec, which manufactures deoxygenation tablets, hair curlers and pocket heaters, and Nittetsu Life's mushroom venture. In interviews conducted in April 1990, the managers of several of these enterprises made it clear that the ability to make a profit would depend upon the substitution of cheaper female workers for the imposed legacy of older male employees. The pace of this substitution, however, would be determined by the rate at which the current workforce reaches retirement age, thereby demonstrating Nippon Steel's continuing commitment, albeit in modified form, to the principle of "lifetime employment". To some extent, enterprises of the employment creation type have also allowed Nippon Steel to substitute local employment for interregional mobility in the case of older workers. The real problem, however, is that

Nippon Steel cannot find productive uses for all these people, whether in Kamaishi or elsewhere.

Second, some of these new enterprises (and particularly those with good growth prospects) are major employers in their own right. For example, the new Kamaishi branch factory of SMC, a leading manufacture of compressor equipment, was expected to have absorbed 54 outplaced Nippon Steel employees by the end of 1991 as part of a local workforce of 420, which would make it a larger employer even than Nippon Steel's remaining steel interests in Kamaishi.

Of greater interest in the present context, however, are the range of employment adjustments listed under "other activities" in Table 6.4, several of which have strong interregional components. Some workers were outplaced to traditional suppliers or subsidiaries in the local area, firms which had little choice but to accept what was probably an unwelcome imposition. It is significant, however, that total employment under "other activities" was smaller at the beginning of 1990 than at the end of 1987, for over the intervening period Nippon Steel's local subcontractors also underwent very harsh retrenchment, reducing the availability of employment opportunities for potential transferees. According to Nippon Steel sources, between 1987 and 1990 employment amongst the company's local subcontractors fell from around 1,400 to just 400. Nevertheless, a total of 135 people were on long term outplacement from the Kamaishi Works to companies other than the new enterprise subsidiaries as of January 1990. The majority of these had been placed with local firms, but 10 had been found jobs elsewhere in the Tōhoku District, mainly in Sendai, and 40 had been placed with firms located in the Tōkyō area.

These 50 outplacements represent an interregional adjustment additional to the 250 permanent transfers mentioned earlier, but this is by no means the end of the mobility dimension, for of the remaining workers listed under "other activities" in Table 6.4, 125 were dispatched on temporary loans elsewhere. 110 were sent to other Nippon Steel sites on *shokan ōen*, including 90 who went to Muroran, to be accommodated in dormitories for the duration of the loan while their families stayed behind in Kamaishi. These workers could not return to their old jobs, however, which had disappeared when Kamaishi's steelmaking facilities closed down. Instead, many of them have been taken on by two of the larger new factories in Kamaishi, owned by Shirakawa (a fabricator of steel frames for the construction industry) and SMC (*Tekkō Shimbun*, 15/5/1990). In effect, by using interregional transfers of the temporary loan variety, Nippon Steel has been able to buy time for itself until new local employment opportunities have been opened up. The loan period was one year rather than the normal few months (Shin Nippon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsujo, 1990b), but the position of the employees affected

was eased by the availability of a variety of allowances paid by the company to workers called upon to undertake transfers, including a special allowance for workers who choose to leave their families behind (Tekkô Rôren, 1989) - a topic to which we shall return in Chapter 8. Of the remaining workers affected by temporary loans, 15 were sent to other companies (*shagai haken*), including 10 to a Nissan Diesel plant in the Kantô district, while most of the others dispatched on inter-plant loans went to a Nippon Steel research establishment near Tôkyô.

In summary, the employment adjustments which have taken place at Kamaishi under the latest rationalization plan have combined interregional transfers of various kinds with retirements and the expansion of employment opportunities through the development of new enterprises. As of January 1990 some 425 employees of the Kamaishi Works were actually at work elsewhere following some form of temporary or permanent interregional transfer, or 25.4% of the workforce which had been on the Works' books in December 1987.

6.4 Discussion

In this case study, we have examined the ways in which personnel transfers have been used as a means of coping with surplus manpower during the rundown of the Kamaishi Steelworks. We must now consider what conclusions can be drawn from the case study regarding the role of different types of personnel transfers in the process of structural change.

First of all, it is clear that personnel transfers of whatever type cannot be understood in isolation from alternative forms of employment adjustment. The management of employment decline at the Kamaishi Works has been a long term enterprise, involving a combination of restricted entry and induced retirements as well as transfers.

Second, we have seen that measures adopted at one site within an organization must be interpreted in the context of events taking place elsewhere, and upon circumstances specific to the times. The shift in the major destination of transfers after 1970, for example, was determined less by factors operating in Kamaishi itself than by changes in the availability of employment opportunities elsewhere. Consider also the fact that job creation projects and diversification out of steelmaking were not seriously pursued at the Kamaishi Steelworks until the 1980s. Why was this not done in the 1960s, when Fuji Steel was already trying to concentrate its efforts elsewhere? The answer is simple: in the 1960s, mass permanent interregional transfers were a viable option, but in the 1980s they were not, and thus something else had to be tried.

Third, there are very marked differences between the conditions under which the various types of interregional transfer are brought into play, whether as a temporary expedient or as a long term solution to an underlying structural problem. For example, while permanent transfers may be appropriate to conserve younger workers, for older workers the preferred solution is outplacement to other firms which may end up taking the transferees on permanently: outplacement of what is in effect a "one-way ticket" variety (*katamichi shukkô*) thus becomes an alternative to the operation of an external labour market with associated redundancies. As for loans, these represent a way of marking time, of shuffling workers around until proper jobs can be found for them - jobs made vacant through the retirement of others, as in the Kamaishi Steelworks of the 1970s and early 1980s, or jobs which have to be created especially for them. In Chapter 2, we employed White's terminology to describe Japanese personnel transfers as "coordinated systems", as indeed most are at the management level, but under the pressures of rapid change it is possible for "loose systems" to develop, in which vacancies are filled rapidly but some individuals remain "in limbo" until a proper job can be found for them. In effect, temporary loans of workers operate as a barely disguised limbo.

The idea that some Japanese transfer systems may be "loose" also opens up another possibility: whereas coordinated systems by their very nature operate according to a strict timetable, loose systems can accommodate substantial time lags between the stimulus which sets a sequence of transfers in motion and the last transfers in that sequence. A good example of this can be found in the actual implementation of the Fourth Rationalization Plan. While the plan originally called for the closure of the last blast furnace at Muroran, this closure has been repeatedly postponed, in the face of healthy domestic demand for steel products, and the transfers indicated in the Plan (and in Table 6.1) have yet to take place. Transfers from Hirohata were delayed for similar reasons, and these delays had substantial knock-on effects - in creating temporary employment opportunities at Muroran, for example, which have been filled by workers on temporary loan from Kamaishi, and at Kimitsu, to where the Muroran workers were supposed to move, and which has had to import workers on temporary loan from Yahata to fill the gaps (*Shin Nippon Seitetsu Sokuhô*, 13/12/90). The implication here is that transfer activity may continue long after the initial stimulus to movement, (in this case the yen revaluation of the mid-1980s), has passed. This would undermine any straightforward correlation between transfer activity and current economic conditions, a problem to which reference has already been made in Chapter 4.2.2.

Finally, attention must be paid to the ability of workers to accept transfers when offered, to their inherent mobility. In the early days, and especially when there was a strong voluntary component, transfers creamed off the more mobile elements of the workforce in Kamaishi, leaving behind those with strong local commitments or with

other reasons to resist change. As a result, transfers became progressively less effective as a means of adjusting the workforce, and eventually this led to changes in industrial location (through the establishment of new enterprises) as an alternative to labour migration. The lesson to be drawn is that even in Japan, there are still limits to the power of even the largest companies to transform their own internal employment geographies.

It could be argued, of course, that the sequence of events which has unfolded at Kamaishi is a unique case which cannot be relied upon as the basis for any broader insights into personnel transfer activity elsewhere within the Nippon Steel Corporation, let alone within the steel industry in general. The further one delves into matters of detail, the more substantive this criticism must become. Nevertheless, a substantial volume of information is available from published sources regarding other Nippon Steel facilities, and other steelmaking firms, which suggests that some of the measures reported in the case study have also been widely deployed elsewhere, and that the conclusions which have been drawn do also have a wider validity. Case studies of the Kimitsu Works by Aoki (1987) and of Kimitsu and other facilities operated by the largest steel companies (Rôdô Chôsa Kenkyûkai, 1990), for example, stress repeatedly the importance of outplacements as a means of disposing of older workers, the transformation that has taken place in the function which outplacements performs (a switch from being a positive means of stimulating affiliated companies to a way of obscuring redundancies), and the difficulties which the steel companies have faced in finding enough new places of employment on which to offload surplus staff. Not only has this been an important driving force behind many diversification moves, but in some cases it has also caused considerable dislocation amongst receiving firms, who have in turn been obliged to offload their own staff on even smaller subcontractors to make space for the newcomers. It is significant, however, that most of the outplacement activity mentioned in these sources is recorded as being local in nature, whereas a substantial proportion of recent outplacements at Kamaishi have had an interregional dimension. In this regard at least, Kamaishi's status as a company town, in which the decline of the core employer has closed off employment opportunities throughout the local economy, has probably given the Kamaishi case a distinctive if not unique geographical dimension.

Rather less well documented elsewhere is the role performed by short-term adjustment measures such as loans of workers. Certainly loans to other companies, particularly in the automobile industry, were widely employed throughout the steel industry during the late 1970s, as reported by Rohlen (1979), while Aoki (1987, pp. 42-45) notes that as of August 1986 some 612 workers throughout Nippon Steel were on *shagai haken* loans to other companies, the main destinations again being automobile companies such as Toyota Motors, which are also major customers for Nippon Steel's products. In this respect many of these loans take place within what Nagano (1989) has

described as "intermediate organizations", which straddle the conventional boundaries between internal and external labour markets (for further discussion of which see Chapter 2 above). Aoki notes that at older Nippon Steel facilities (such as Hirohata and Muroran) just about every worker in the under 45 age group, which he identifies as the main target for such transfers, has undergone a loan to another company at least once during his working career. Even at the most successful plant, Kimitsu, 80 workers were currently on *shagai haken* loans in July 1986, 60 of whom were at Toyota Motors. Unlike outplacements, therefore, which normally have a strongly local orientation, particularly when the objective is simply to offload elderly employees, loans often involve temporary interregional mobility, since the destinations are specific and normally in sectors other than steel. In this regard, therefore, Kamaishi's experience has by no means been unique. The same holds true for inter-branch loans, which also normally have a clear geographical dimension. Recent evidence culled from the steel industry press for another Nippon Steel facility, that at Yahata, provides supporting evidence for both types of loan (Table 6.5).

Table 6.5 Loans of blue-collar workers from the Yahata Steelworks, as recorded in the specialist steel industry press September 1989 - April 1991

Destination	Location	Persons	Period
Inter-company loans			
Nittetsu Micrometal	Saitama-ken	5	September 89 - February 90
Nittetsu Micrometal	Saitama-ken	5	March 89 - August 90
Nittetsu Micrometal	Saitama-ken	5	September 90 - February 91
Nissan Jidōsha	Fukuoka-ken	20	January 90 - June 90
Nissan Jidōsha	Fukuoka-ken	20	July 90 - December 90
Nissan Jidōsha	Fukuoka-ken	20	January 91 - June 91
Nippon Tubular Products	Hiroshima-ken	11	October 89 - September 90
Nippon Tubular Products	Hiroshima-ken	5	October 90 - September 91
Toyota Motors	Aichi-ken	30	June 90- November 90
Toyota Motors	Aichi-ken	25	December 90- May 91
Inter-branch loans			
Kimitsu Steelworks	Chiba-ken	40	January 91 - December 91
Kimitsu Steelworks	Chiba-ken	115	March 91 - ?
Technical Research Centre	Chiba-ken	10	January 91 - December 91

Sources: *Shin Nippon Seitetsu Sokuhō*, 5/9/89, p. 4; 14/6/90, pp. 5-6, 30/7/90, pp. 4-5; 14/9/90, p. 3; 15/11/90, p. 4; 13/12/90, pp. 4-5; 19/12/90; *Kimitsu*, 27/4/91

There are two other aspects of structural adjustment-related mobility within the steel industry that deserve rather fuller treatment, however, than they have received thus far. The first, which has been mentioned only in passing, concerns the locus of real decision-

making power, and the second, which has yet to be discussed, concerns the extent to which the employer has acted to overcome the effects of distance as a barrier to worker acceptance of transfer orders.

We noted at the outset of the case study that the company union at Kamaishi has usually adopted a compliant attitude towards permanent transfers. In part, this has reflected a realistic assessment on the union's part that mobility, welcome or otherwise, is part of the price that workers must be prepared to pay for security of employment, particularly given the bleak long-term prospects of the Kamaishi Works. Nevertheless, the union has been formally consulted about each of the large scale transfers. There is little doubt, however, that the real decision-making power lies with the company - not just for white-collar staff, who have always had to accept job rotation as a fact of life as well as a contractual requirement, but also for blue-collar workers. There is also evidence that with the progressive deterioration of the employment situation, especially for older workers, the company has tightened its grip.

The clearest manifestation of this is with respect to the formal process of consultation with each individual which is supposed to precede a decision on whether or not that individual is asked to move. We have already noted that Nippon Steel experienced some difficulty in obtaining the 250 volunteers for permanent transfer from Kamaishi specified under the Fourth Rationalization Plan, as would be expected given the top heavy age structure of the workforce. Evidence available from non-company sources suggests that individual employees were given little choice in the matter, since the normal selection procedure, which took into account factors such as home ownership, education needs, elderly dependents etc., appears to have been suspended in favour of an extension of the company's self-evaluation system for managers to its blue-collar workers, which limited the scope for consideration of these factors (Rôdô Chôsa Kenkyûkai, 1990, p. 121). Certainly, the interview schedule provided to each employee by the company, and admittedly made public by a local group dedicated to opposing the closures (Shin Nittetsu Gôrika Kara Kamaishi o Mamoru Iwate-ken Renkakukai Junbikai, 1987, pp. 17-18), mentions special factors only as an afterthought, and is clearly based on the assumption that a choice is to be made between types of transfer (*shukkô* vs *haichi tenkan*) rather than between a transfer and staying put. In short, the company left its employees little option but to accept the idea of a transfer.

It is important not to conclude from this, however, that the company was being excessively unfair or underhand in its behaviour: its considerable efforts to develop and attract new enterprises suggest a real commitment to maintaining employment for its workers, and maintaining it locally as far as possible, although not at the cost of

preserving obsolete steelmaking facilities, the closure of which was accepted as necessary not just by the company but by its union as well (Sakagami et. al., 1989, pp. 23-25).

As for distance as a barrier to mobility, Nippon Steel, like most major Japanese employers, provides a wide range of benefits designed to reduce the cost of movement, some of which relate to housing and are therefore best left to the next chapter, while others are specifically linked to transfer activity *per se*. For example, as part of the arrangements agreed with its union for permanent transfers under the Third Rationalization Plan of 1984, the company paid a "special transfer allowance" of ¥300,000 (¥250=US\$1.00 in December 1984) to each worker undertaking a long-distance permanent transfer accompanied by his family (¥190,000 if undertaking *tanshin funin* - for which see Chapter 8) (Rôsei Jihô, 1986). The same allowance was also paid under the Fourth Rationalization Plan, along with an "ordinary transfer allowance" linked to distance, family status and rank within the company, and special leave to facilitate the move (Tekkô Rôren, 1989, p. 193). Special allowances are paid with respect to outplacements, and similar sums are also paid to workers who are sent on temporary loan to other companies, to compensate for the additional costs which arise when (as is usually the case) the family is left behind for the duration of the loan. In short, while the sums involved may not be adequate to compensate each worker fully for the real and psychological costs of mobility, the company nevertheless does make a substantial effort to reduce the "friction of distance" as much as possible so as to promote the smooth operation of the internal labour market, and thereby facilitate the process of structural change.

6.5 Summary of Chapter 6

A case study drawn from the postwar history of the Japanese steel industry (the run-down of steelmaking at Kamaishi) has been used to illustrate how various types of personnel transfer can contribute to the process of structural change. Permanent transfers and, increasingly, outplacements which are supposedly temporary but often become permanent, provide a long term solution to spatial imbalances in labour supply within internal labour markets, while temporary loans, to other branches or other firms, provide a coping mechanism while more permanent solutions are found. The precise balance between various types of transfer, the pattern of destinations, and the deployment of other and competing forms of labour force adjustment, such as the development of alternative employment opportunities locally in "new enterprises", will depend however upon the particular circumstances of the company in question at a particular moment in time, and upon conditions prevailing throughout the company, not just in a particular locality.

While Nippon Steel, like most other large Japanese companies, uses a variety of financial benefits to ease the process of mobility, there are still grounds for workers to resist the order to move. Of these, the most important is the problem of housing, and it is to the peculiarities of the Japanese housing market, and the ways in which housing provision influences and indeed sometimes facilitates interregional migration within internal labour markets, that we turn in the next chapter.

Chapter 7 Housing the Transferee

7.1 Introduction

In the next two chapters, the focus of attention shifts from labour migration within the internal labour markets of large Japanese organizations in favour of population (i.e. residential) migration, and more specifically to the mechanisms by means of which the former is translated into the latter. In this chapter we examine the issue of housing provision, with particular reference to the "company housing" sector, while in the next the focus is upon the closely related issue of "partial migration", the maintenance of dual residences by transferees. Both chapters rely upon published survey reports rather than case studies of particular organizations, and both are short and narrowly focused, in part because the information available on the geographical dimension is limited, but also by choice. These are complex and important subjects, to which we cannot pay adequate attention within the confines of a single thesis. The intent here is to describe the main features of housing provision for transferees and the migration response: discussion of some of the broader issues involved, and a statement of priorities for future research, are taken up in the concluding chapter.

Let us now turn, therefore, to the salient characteristics of housing provision for transferees, which may be described first in the general context of the options open to the decision makers involved, and then in the more specific context of Japanese practice.

Any decision to relocate an employee within an internal labour market involves two principal actors: the employer (or employing organization) and the potential transferee. Any associated and consequential decisions regarding residential change may also involve the same two principal actors, but there is no absolute necessity that this should be the case.

From the employer's perspective there are three main options. The first is to adopt the view that housing is entirely a matter for the employee to arrange and finance. This is a harsh option, since any change of residence will trigger both monetary and social or psychological costs which will then fall entirely upon the transferee. There are times however when such a course can be justified: for example, when the transfer has come about entirely at the employee's request, or when the gain to the employer of an individual's agreement to move is zero, perhaps because adequate supplies of suitable labour are already available at the proposed destination. In the latter case, the offer of a transfer may itself be a ruse to force the employee to resign voluntarily, and thus save the employer the cost of a compulsory redundancy. Whenever there are positive advantages

to an employer of a transfer going ahead, however, this option is likely to prove counterproductive, particularly if it provokes disaffection and even a refusal to move.

The second option, and that favoured in most developed economies when a transfer takes place at the employer's behest, is to offer a package of assistance and/or benefits that will reduce the cost of the move to the employee. A typical package of benefits may include a disturbance allowance, payments for visits by the family to the new location of employment, information on local housing markets and social facilities, and assistance in the sale of the current residence. Sometimes the package is managed by the employer, but large organizations have increasingly turned to specialist relocation agencies (such as Black Horse in the United Kingdom) to handle all the details on their behalf. Sell (1990) and Salt (1990) discuss the "relocation policies" adopted by leading employers in the United States and the United Kingdom respectively, and relocation in Britain is also the subject of an exhaustive treatment by Shortland (1987). Leading Japanese employers similarly offer a range of benefits and assistance to mobile employees, as we shall see in Section 7.4 below.

The distinguishing characteristic of the Japanese case, however, and the one to which we shall devote the bulk of this chapter, is the extent to which employers depend upon the third option: providing directly for the employee's housing needs through some form of dedicated "company housing", a provision which mirrors the workings of the internal labour market, and in some respects (given the associated reduction in uncertainty) actually facilitates it. Indeed, one could refer to such provision as an "internal housing market", although Dore's complaint (Dore et. al., 1989: see Chapter 2 above), that an internal labour market that has no market mechanism is simply an administrative procedure and no market at all, can also be applied to this interpretation of the company housing sector.

As for the employee's perspective, again there are three main options, once the offer of a transfer has been agreed. The first, obviously, is full residential migration, with the abandonment of one home in favour of another. The second, which is inherently constrained by the distance of the associated job transfer, is to substitute commuting for residential change. This option is also mediated by the quality of transportation linkages, which is why it is seen as emerging at a later stage in Zelinsky's "mobility transition" (Zelinsky, 1971). The third option is a compromise between the other two: partial residential migration, in which the family is left behind at the original location while the employee moves alone to a separate and temporary residence at the new location, returning home only occasionally at intervals of weeks, months, or even years. This form of migration, which is known as *tanshin funin* in Japanese, will be examined in detail in Chapter 8.

In the present chapter we examine the evidence regarding the use of different forms of housing by transferees, before focusing in detail upon the company housing sector, which is found to perform a role totally out of proportion to its minor contribution to the overall supply of housing in Japan. We then briefly examine other forms of housing assistance to transferees, as further confirmation of the close involvement of Japanese organizations in the residential mobility of their employees.

7.2 Transferees and housing: The Japanese case

Although large quantities of data have been published on most aspects of housing provision in Japan, little evidence is available that deals specifically with transferees and their housing needs. The most important exception is the 1983 Housing Survey of Japan which, unlike its more recent counterpart in 1988, included a specific question on migration. This question presented a menu of possible reasons for migration from which each respondent was restricted to one choice, and one of the options available was "transfer" (*tenkin*). The reports of the survey include cross-tabulations of migration by households over the past five years (by reason) against type of housing before and after the move, which allows for transferees to be specifically identified, although migration itself is not broken down in any way, and thus it includes moves from one street to another along with those from one end of Japan to the other. The same reports do reveal, however, that most household migration caused by personnel transfers did take place across prefectural boundaries (61.7% of the total, including transfers from posts in overseas countries), rather than within the same prefecture (29.0%) or the same municipality (8.6%).

As for housing types, these are broken down in considerable detail in the original Survey, but have been aggregated into four main groups for the purposes of this discussion: owner occupied dwellings, privately-owned rented dwellings, "issued housing" (*kyûyo jûtaku*), and other housing types (which include publicly-owned rented dwellings, dormitories, lodging houses and households living with relatives). The concept of "issued housing" requires some elaboration: it is defined by the Survey as including dwellings owned or administered by public bodies or private companies which are "rented to their officials or workers in order to meet the needs of the work or rented as a part of salaries and wages" (Sômuchô, 1985, p. xxv). In other words, it is accommodation that is either owned by, or the use of which is effectively controlled by, the employer of the occupant, which is the closest that official Japanese statistical sources get to a formal definition of "company housing". We should note, however, that it is not the only definition, and care must be taken in comparing surveys with variable classifications of the housing stock. Note also that in the case of the Housing Survey and others noted in Appendix A, the appropriate definition of "company housing" includes

accommodation made available to public sector bureaucrats, whereas other surveys cover listed companies only.

Table 7.1 Types of accommodation occupied by all households, all migrant households and all transferee households, Japan, 1983

Unit: % of households in each category

	All households	Migrant households	Transferee households
Accommodation			
Owner occupied	62.0	33.7	10.1
Private rental	24.3	45.8	36.3
Issued housing	5.2	10.5	48.6
Other	8.5	10.0	5.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Migrant households are defined as having changed their address between 1979 and 1983; transferee households are a subgroup of migrant households, identified by the fact that their last change of address was caused by a personnel transfer (*tenkin*).

Source: Calculated from 1983 Housing Survey of Japan data as recorded in Sômuchô (1987), p. 525.

The results obtained by the Housing Survey are summarized in Table 7.1, and reveal a remarkable degree of differentiation in housing provision between transferee households, migrant households of any type, and households in general. For the latter, owner occupation is by far the most important form of accommodation, accounting for nearly two-thirds of all Japanese households. This is followed by private rented dwellings, which housed approximately a quarter of all households, and no other type of dwelling achieves a share in double figures. By contrast, nearly a half of all households which had changed residence over the previous five years lived in private rented dwellings, as compared with only a third living under owner-occupation. For migrants as a whole, therefore, the private rented sector emerges as by far the most important source of accommodation.

For transferees, however, the picture is radically different. The share of accommodation after migration accounted for by owner-occupied dwellings scarcely reaches double figures, and while the private rented sector continues to perform an important function, its share is substantially lower than that for migrant households in general. Instead, Table 7.1 records a massive shift in favour of "issued housing", which

accounted for nearly one half of all transferee households at the time of the Survey, four times its share of migrant households in general.

As remarkable as this concentration appears, it is still an underestimate of the true extent of the linkage between company housing and internal labour markets, for although only around a quarter of all transferee households (23.7% of them to be precise) lived in issued housing both before and after the move, nearly a third (32.4%) lived in issued housing before moving, which means that company housing was involved (at either the origin or the destination or at both) in the case of no fewer than 57.3% of all transfers of households. In other words, company housing was around eleven times more important for transferee households than its share of the overall Japanese housing stock in 1983 would suggest, far outpacing even the private rental sector, which by the same method of accounting was only twice as important for transferees as might be expected given the composition of the housing stock, although it was still very important in absolute terms. And even these figures are likely to under-estimate the importance of employer involvement in housing provision, not only because they take no account of subsidies and other forms of assistance to individual transferees renting what is otherwise defined as private accommodation, but also because the concept of "administration" included within the definition of "issued housing" is somewhat vague, and may well have led to a degree of under-reporting. As we shall see later on, a large proportion of companies augment their own, company-owned stocks of housing by securing supplies of private rental accommodation under lease on their employees' behalf, but it is unclear whether all such arrangements are fully covered under the Survey's definition. And even in cases where an employee has obtained a direct tenancy from a private landlord, the employer may well have been involved in locating the property and negotiating terms. Bearing these caveats in mind, therefore, it is safe to conclude from the results of the Housing Survey that Japanese organizations are heavily and directly involved in securing accommodation for transferee households.

Further evidence of the importance of company housing comes from the three Tōkyō Metropolitan Government surveys (of 1976, 1981 and 1986) to which much reference was made in Chapter 3. In each of these surveys the type of housing at destination is broken down into categories, one of which is described as "company housing and dwellings for government officials" (*shataku to kōmuin jūtaku*), which is broadly equivalent to "issued housing" as defined in the Housing Survey of Japan. Housing types are cross-tabulated in the survey reports against reasons for migration and regions of origin and destination. Unfortunately, personnel transfers are not identified as a separate category, but migration caused by employment-related factors is specifically listed, and as we have already seen in Chapter 1, this form of migration is dominated by personnel transfers. Although the regional categorization is rather crude, it does at least

allow for the isolation of migration between Tōkyō and the rest of Japan beyond the four prefectures of Southern Kantō, which rules out most short distance moves.

Table 7.2 Employment-related migration between Tōkyō and Japan beyond Southern Kantō, by type of accommodation after migration, 1976-86

Unit: % of migrants in each year

	1976	1981	1986
Accommodation			
Owner occupied	32.9	33.0	31.3
Private rental	22.9	23.4	24.3
Company housing	24.9	29.2	32.1
Other	19.3	14.4	12.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Calculated from data in Tōkyō-to (1978, 1983, 1988).

The types of housing occupied after the move by individuals whose migrations between Tōkyō and the area beyond Southern Kantō were caused by employment-related factors are shown in Table 7.2. Note that these data refer to individuals, not household units, and are thus somewhat biased in favour of transferees, since the average household size for transferee migrants is larger than that for other types of migrants. Nevertheless, the results do confirm the importance of company housing in the provision of accommodation for interregional migrants, and they also suggest that the role of company housing has increased over time. For example, in 1976 company housing lagged behind owner occupied accommodation as a source of housing for interregional migrants, but by 1986 it had risen to first place. This is not just a matter of relative change. Of all housing sectors, only the company housing sector recorded absolute increases in the numbers of interregional migrants accommodated, of 10.2% between 1976 and 1981, and 1.4% between 1981 and 1986.

The same source also gives information on type of housing before and after the move, although the data are unfortunately not differentiated on the basis of the reason for migration. As regards migration between Tōkyō and the region beyond Southern Kantō, the data suggest that an increasing amount of migration, in both relative and absolute terms, has been taking place entirely within the company housing sector. In absolute terms, such migration rose by 1.0% between 1976 and 1981, and by 9.7% between 1981 and 1986. In relative terms, migration entirely within the company housing sector

accounted for only 10.9% of all migration between Tôkyô and the region beyond Southern Kantô in 1976, but for 12.0% in 1981 and 14.5% in 1986.

7.3 The provision of company housing

Evidence pointing to a large, and possibly even an increasing role for company housing in accommodating the transferee appears even more remarkable in light of the fact that over time, the proportion of Japan's housing stock accounted for by "issued housing" has dropped substantially. Table 7.3, which is based upon Housing Survey data (and definitions), shows that the number of company housing units in Japan peaked in the mid 1970s, while the proportion of Japan's overall housing stock accounted for by such accommodation had already passed its maximum a decade earlier.

Table 7.3 Stock of "issued housing", Japan, 1963-88

	Number of issued housing units (⁰⁰⁰)	Issued housing as a percentage of all dwelling units
1963	1,433	10.5
1968	1,674	8.8
1973	1,839	7.3
1978	1,839	6.3
1983	1,819	5.7
1988	1,550	4.5

Source: Calculated from Housing Survey of Japan data as recorded in Sômuchô (1991), p. 518.

Table 7.4 New construction starts for "issued housing", Japan, 1970-89

	Number of issued housing units started (⁰⁰⁰)	Issued housing units started as a percentage of all dwelling units started
1970	88	5.9
1975	38	2.8
1980	24	1.9
1985	20	1.6
1987	22	1.3
1988	24	1.4
1989	29	1.7

Source: Calculated from Ministry of Construction data as recorded in Sômuchô (1991), p. 270.

Table 7.4 shows that the construction of new company housing (ie. housing purpose-built for a specific employer, not including buildings subsequently leased for corporate use) collapsed both in absolute terms and as a percentage of new housing starts during the 1970s, through a combination of declining demand caused by the secular shift to owner-occupation, rising construction costs linked to rapid land price inflation, as well as other factors, and that despite a small upturn in the late 1980s (of which more below) it has accounted for less than 2% of all new housing starts throughout the 1980s. As a result, the national stock of company housing has aged more rapidly than that of most other types of accommodation: according to the 1988 Housing Survey, only 21.1% of "issued housing" extant at the time of the Survey had been constructed since 1981, compared with 24.1% of owner occupied dwellings and 31.0% of private rental dwellings (56.5% in the case of private rental dwellings of non-wooden construction).

The dominant role of company housing in accommodating the transferee would thus appear to be something of a paradox. Upon closer inspection, however, the recorded decline in the importance of the company housing stock may itself be rather misleading, while the willingness of companies to intervene directly in the provision of homes for those who are required to move can be shown to be a rational response to evolving conditions in both the housing and labour markets.

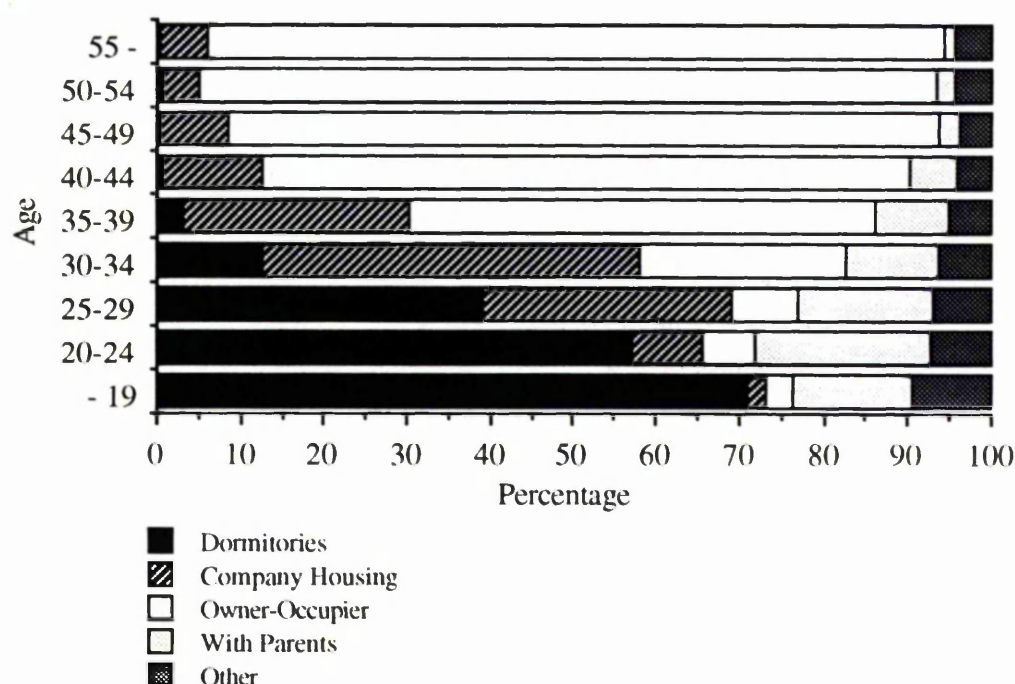
As regards the overall figures for the company housing stock, there are several important qualifications to make. One such qualification derives from the fact that this stock is itself internally differentiated between, for example, housing for ordinary blue-collar workers at one extreme and for senior managers at the other, with the higher mobility of the latter group (due to repeated transfers of the *tenkin* variety, as described in previous chapters) leading to a much higher turnover rate for managerial accommodation. High levels of mobility within the company housing sector are not incompatible, therefore, with a small (and declining) stock of such housing, providing that the balance of housing supply has shifted towards the more mobile groups. We shall return to the question of differentiation within the company housing stock in Chapter 9, since it has geographical implications which stretch far beyond the narrow issue of housing the transferee.

Since the late 1960s in particular, rising real incomes coupled with company-sponsored schemes to encourage house purchases have enabled an increasing proportion of Japanese workers to realize their preference for home ownership, and in many cases the employer has helped this process along by making available suitable lots, sometimes by recycling redundant former company housing land. This trend has not been confined to the managerial ranks, but has also benefited blue-collar workers, who are in any case

less likely to be relocated, and can thus approach the external housing market with clearer long-term expectations.

The results are apparent in age-specific profiles of accommodation types for blue-collar workers, a typical example of which (for the largest steelmakers) is shown in Figure 7.1. While (company-owned) dormitories provide the bulk of accommodation for the under-25s, who in this case are mostly single men, by the early thirties company housing (here meaning flats and houses for married personnel) is the dominant mode, and by the time workers are in their forties three-quarters have become home owners. The emergence of this profile, combined with the steady ageing of the workforce, has led not only to a reduction in the proportion of workers who are accommodated in company housing (of whatever kind), but also to substantial vacancy rates in company-owned residential facilities.

Figure 7.1 Housing occupied by unionized blue-collar permanent employees of Japan's five largest steelmaking companies, by age of the employee, 1988



Source: Wiltshire (1992, p. 73); based on data in Tekkô Rôren (1990).

Consider a specific example: that of the Kamaishi steelworks. By the mid-1980s over 70% of Nippon Steel's employees at Kamaishi lived in owner-occupied dwellings, whereas in 1954 60% had lived in company housing (see Wiltshire, 1992, pp. 72-73). The spectacle of abandoned company-owned apartment blocks in Kamaishi certainly reflects local factors rather than national trends, but it is not only geographically marginal locations which suffer from high vacancy rates. According to a survey undertaken by the

Housing Research and Advancement Foundation of Japan in 1988, some 22.2% of company-owned housing throughout Japan was vacant at the time of the survey, and only 26.6% of companies in the survey reported full occupancy (Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentô, 1989, p. 7). Vacancy rates of this magnitude signify a substantial misallocation of resources in relation to housing demand, which is reflected in the overall reduction in company housing stocks and the low rate of new construction. According to the results of the August 1990 Survey of Labour Market Trends (for details of which see Appendix A), less than a quarter of Japanese manufacturing firms with 1,000 or more regular employees now provide directly for the accommodation needs of more than 15% of their workers (Seisaku Chôسابu, 1990, p. 45).

The point to be made here is not that company housing is an obsolete housing form, but rather that there have been processes at work reducing the importance of company housing for workers who are not normally geographically mobile anyway. For the managerial worker, however, while the maintenance of a permanent home (near the most frequent location of employment) has obvious financial and personal attractions, the need remains to find accommodation (for part or all of the family) on a temporary basis when a transfer comes through to a remote location, and there is no evidence that demands for rental accommodation under these circumstances have diminished. The result has been a shift by companies away from provision *en masse* to provision for specific groups, amongst whom transferees have been singled out for special attention.

Direct evidence that transferees are given priority in company housing provision is available from a number of sources. A survey conducted in 1986 by the Labour Administration Research Institute (details of which are again provided in Appendix A) reveals that 61.8% of private companies with 500 or more employees gave transferees (*tenkin*) priority rights in the allocation of company-owned housing or dormitory space, a proportion that increases markedly with company size, from 54.5% of companies with 500-999 employees to 73.9% of companies with 3,000 or more employees (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1986, pp. 36-38). Likewise, a similar survey conducted by the Housing Research and Advancement Foundation in 1988 found that of the 70.4% of Japanese publicly-quoted companies which maintained company housing partially or exclusively for family use, 91.2% imposed some form of restriction or qualification on which employees can live in company housing. Of companies imposing such qualifications, the largest proportion (62.5%) restricted company housing in whole or in part to those who "were required to accept transfers at the company's request" (Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentô, 1989, p. 11).

These restrictions are in turn reflected in actual housing usage. Here we must rely once again upon 1983 Housing Survey data, which unfortunately is rather dated, but

which does reveal that almost half (49.3%) of migrant households who moved into company housing ("issued housing") over the 1979-83 period did so because of a transfer. As for migrant households which had already been in company housing before the move, more than two-thirds (67.7%) were transferees, as were more than three-quarters (75.9%) of those moving into company housing from owner-occupied dwellings. For these categories of households in particular, in which the employee at the centre of the move is old enough to have a family of his (or her) own, transfers into company housing are not simply a matter of policy, but actually dominate in practice.

A shift in the balance of company housing provision in favour of transferees, brought about not only by changes in the structure of residential preferences amongst employees but also by positive discrimination of this kind on the employers' part, would thus appear to provide a strong explanation for the continuing importance of company housing for geographically mobile employees, despite the small and declining share of company housing within the national housing stock. There are also at least two other important considerations, however.

The first of these is that the company housing stock is itself concentrated (in both relative and absolute terms) amongst the largest companies, those which are in turn more likely to operate on a multi-regional basis. According to the results of the August 1990 Survey of Labour Market Trends, for example, around 93% of manufacturing companies with 1,000 or more employees either owned or leased accommodation for exclusive use by their own employees, as compared with only 70% of companies with 300-999 employees and just 52% of companies with 100-299 employees (Seisaku Chôسابu, 1990, p. 45). These figures include housing (both apartments and dormitories) set aside for exclusive use by single people: when such accommodation is excluded, the relationship between company size and housing provision becomes even more marked, since smaller companies are far more likely than large companies to maintain company-administered accommodation for single people only. Hence while around 86% of manufacturing companies with 1,000 or more employees either owned or leased accommodation for use either in part or exclusively by families, the equivalent figures for companies with 300-999 and 100-299 employees were 50% and 34% respectively. The same contrast is shown even more clearly in the Housing Research and Advancement Foundation's 1988 survey, according to which companies with 5,000 or more employees which maintain company housing for partial or exclusive use by families had an average of 1,474.5 housing units each under their control (through ownership or lease), whereas the equivalent figure for companies with fewer than 500 employees was just 32.6 units (Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentô, 1989, pp. 6-7).

Second, as was noted earlier, the Housing Survey figures on "issued housing" are likely to underestimate the importance of corporate involvement in housing provision, because many companies augment their own, company-owned stocks of housing with supplies of private rental accommodation obtained under lease. In fact, according to the Housing Research and Advancement Foundation's 1988 survey, a higher proportion of private companies lease all or part of the housing they control (85.8% of companies) than actually own all or part of it (72.8%). Furthermore in a similar survey conducted by the same organization in 1980, the proportion of companies owning at least some company housing was actually nearly ten percentage points higher, at 82.7%, indicating a substantial shift (during the 1980s at least) towards the leasing of accommodation rather than outright ownership (Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentô, 1989, p. 6). We will suggest a reason for this shift later on: the point to be made here, however, is that in as much as the Housing Survey definition of "issued housing" may lead to a systematic undercounting of accommodation that is leased rather than owned, so the actual supply of housing available to be allocated by companies may actually have expanded, despite what the Housing Survey statistics may suggest.

Irrespective of whether or not figures on the supply of company housing are accurate and comprehensive, however, and on whether those supplies have increased or decreased over time, the fact remains that a very high proportion of companies do make use of it, and that much of this usage concerns provision for transferees. These statistics tell us a great deal about how transferees are accommodated, but they do not explain why Japanese employers have chosen to involve themselves in such a direct manner in housing provision. The rationale for such behaviour is complex, and has changed markedly over time, in response to evolving conditions in the housing and labour markets. More to the point, that rationale also has a distinctive geographical component, which lies at the heart of the accommodation problem for transferees.

Hall (1988) traces the origins of Japanese company housing back to the dormitories constructed in the early decades of the Meiji Era to house the workers required to operate Japan's new factories. Thus:

The vast majority of the workers in Japan's late nineteenth century factories were young, single and female. Most of them were recruited from rural areas and thus their parents had to be persuaded that their daughters would have somewhere safe to live. The solution lay with the "dormitory system". This meant the provision of sleeping, and eating, facilities by the employer, though the standard of that provision was generally very low. The "dormitory system" made control of the (already somewhat submissive) labour force much easier because it made contact with the outside world more difficult. In theory this was to protect the young women from corruption and temptation but it also meant that organization and the spread of ideas (such as Communism) was not so easily achieved - nor was "poaching" by competing firms. (ibid., pp. 5-6)

In short, the functions of these early dormitories were fourfold: to meet the housing needs of the young and unmarried worker, to facilitate migration (not of transferees, as it happens, but of rural-urban migrants), to control the behaviour of the workforce, and to prevent employees from switching jobs.

The dormitory system is still operated by many organizations as a means of accommodating the single young, though living conditions have improved substantially since the late nineteenth century. We have already seen in Figure 7.1, for example, that dormitory accommodation is the main form of housing for young workers in the Japanese steel industry, and in recent years well-appointed dormitories for the young and single have also performed an increasingly important role in many Japanese companies as a means of attracting and retaining supplies of young workers in what has been a very tight external labour market, particularly for new college graduates (Oshima, 1989). We shall also see in the next chapter that dormitories have assumed a more specialized role, and one more specifically linked to personnel transfers, with the emergence of facilities dedicated to the needs of married men temporarily living apart from their families. In historical terms, however, the key role of the early dormitory system was to lay the basis for much wider intervention by employers in the housing market, particularly after the Pacific War.

During the early postwar years, the dormitory concept was expanded into a more extensive system of housing provision for employees, both single and married, which initially took the form of company housing estates, and later on the provision of subsidized loans and other devices to enable employees (especially older employees heading towards retirement age) to buy their own homes (*ibid.*, p. 8). Again, as with the early dormitories, this was not just a matter of paternalistic welfare provision, but also a response to specific management difficulties. Wartime destruction created a serious housing shortage that employers seeking workers were obliged to recognise. As the economy recovered and entered the boom years of the late 1950s and 1960s, triggering massive rural to urban migration, escalating land prices, especially in the largest cities, made it progressively harder for employees to make adequate provision for their own housing needs unaided.

By constructing its own housing stock, the employing organization could at least be certain that the cost of housing its employees (which would have to be met eventually, whether as a benefit or in the pay packet) was minimized, while the employee also had one more reason (the risk of homelessness) not to consider switching jobs. Besides, in addition to the benefit of a secure workforce, the employer could watch the capital value of the land upon which the company housing had been built appreciate from year to year, irrespective of whether the buildings were fully used or not. This long-term investment

value of the land has also benefited the company's tenants, who have traditionally enjoyed highly subsidized rents, subsidies made possible by accounting conventions that record land at historic cost.

We have already seen, however, that despite the problems caused by escalating land prices, Japanese employees have demonstrated a strong preference for owner occupation, a preference that has been facilitated by a wide variety of both employer-based and commercial savings and loan schemes and direct provision of land from company stocks. This switch has been achieved most easily in the more peripheral parts of Japan, where land prices are lower. In the big cities, however, the transition to home ownership has been harder to achieve, resulting in greater pressure upon company housing provision and, according to a number of surveys conducted in the late 1980s, a renewed interest amongst leading employers in direct housing provision (Oshima, 1989; Japan Economic Journal, 1989). This has in turn caused problems for companies (especially smaller companies) who do not have adequate supplies of land upon which to construct new dwellings.

These difficulties are confirmed by the results of the Housing Research and Advancement Foundation's 1988 survey, which demonstrate that of all the external factors affecting companies' housing policies, the most important are the effects of land price inflation in the national capital region and the ability of employees to make alternative provisions (Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentô, 1989, pp. 62-63). The geographical component of the problem is also confirmed by the finding that of those companies which report a shortage of accommodation under their own control, 69.1% face a specific shortage in the capital region, while of those companies reporting a surplus, 63.2% identify that surplus as being located in Japan's provincial regions (*ibid.*, p. 11).

Faced with the cost of acquiring land at its true market value, particularly in large urban areas, many employers have opted instead to lease accommodation, absorbing most of the cost themselves rather than passing it on in rents which would then be well out of line with those sustainable for company-owned property. To keep these costs to a minimum, employers have also kept a close watch on the usage made of leased accommodation, and have kept vacancy rates far lower than those characteristic of company-owned property.

Regional differences in housing costs, underpinned by extreme variations in land values between the metropolitan regions of Japan and more peripheral areas, present difficulties for the interregional migrant which are unique neither to transferees nor to Japan. These include the cost of the search for accommodation and potential capital losses following movements between areas with different rates of house price inflation. The

problem for the transferee however is even greater, not only because moves are frequent, but also because their direction and timing are geared to the requirements of the employer, not to any optimal strategy for investment in the housing market. And in the case of the Japanese transfer system, not only does the short notice given to employees make a protracted search for new accommodation impractical, but the need to ensure that moves take place in "simultaneous chains", so that disturbance within the workplace is minimized, implies that a premium is placed upon the avoidance of delays in the provision of accommodation, which would be impossible if homes had to be bought and sold each time a transfer takes place.

These considerations therefore point to the necessity for employer involvement in the housing market, and particularly in the case of personnel who are subject to frequent transfers. In Japan much of this involvement has been direct, but for reasons which are largely historical: Japanese employers have a tradition of direct provision and have inherited a housing stock suitable for this use upon which alternative claims have diminished. There is clear evidence, however, that dependence upon company-owned accommodation - for transferees as well as for employees in general - has lessened, in favour of leased accommodation. This serves to demonstrate that Japanese practices are far from fossilized, and are capable of change in the face of emerging trends in the housing and labour markets - a theme to which we shall return in Chapter 8.

7.4 Other forms of assistance

Although housing owned or leased by the employer is the dominant mode, which accounts for the extensive treatment accorded to it in this chapter, we should not overlook the fact that a substantial proportion of transferees are accommodated through other means within the private rental sector. Besides, direct provision is not the only way in which companies can ease the transferee's path from one location to another: there are other forms of assistance at the employer's disposal, which more closely resemble the standard benefits available to transferees in most other developed economies.

These benefits may be classified according to whether they are available to all employees, not just to transferees, whether they cover the costs of the move itself or costs which arise after the move, and whether they are specifically targeted at transferees moving with their families (to be considered here) or without their families (the subject of the next chapter). A variety of terms are currently in use by Japanese employers to describe particular benefits, and there is also inconsistency in the use of terms between various surveys, creating a problem of fuzzy definitions much like that already encountered with respect to the definition of personnel transfers. Nevertheless, the main forms of benefit are widely understood in practice, and may be summarized as follows.

First, regarding benefits available to all employees, the only type of any significance consists of rent subsidies (*yachin hojo*) granted to persons living in private rented accommodation, which are designed to reduce the actual cost of accommodation to the employee to a level equivalent to that charged in company-owned or company-leased housing. According to the Housing Research and Advancement Foundation's 1988 survey, 36.1% of Japanese private companies operate rent subsidy schemes of this nature. Of these companies, however, some 44.1% restricted eligibility in whole or in part to employees who have been transferred at the company's request, this being the most widespread form of restriction imposed upon the payment of rent subsidies. Large companies tend to be rather more generous with their provision however: amongst those with 5,000 or more employees, only 11.8% restricted eligibility to transferees. Approximately one half (50.3%) of the companies operating these schemes base their payments upon fixed sums, while around one third (34.6%) pay an agreed percentage of the actual rent charged. Whatever the basis for calculating the amounts due, all companies providing these schemes face the challenge of adjusting for underlying variations in land values, as reflected in rents charged by landlords. This is a particularly serious problem when subsidies are based upon fixed sums, the real value of which will inevitably be lower in metropolitan regions where rents are much higher. Hence the survey found that a majority of the companies paying fixed sums (56.9% of them) vary the level of payments on a regional basis, while 39.4% of companies paying a fixed percentage of the rent also vary that percentage by location. (Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentô, 1989, pp. 51-53).

Rent subsidies are the only significant benefit (outside of company housing provision) designed to reduce the costs arising after the move has been completed. All other benefits are linked to the move itself, and are thus normally available only to transferees. Detailed information on these benefits is available from a number of sources, including surveys conducted by the Industrial Labour Survey Institute, the reports of which include both aggregate statistics and accounts of the sums paid by individually named companies. The main categories of assistance include disturbance allowances (*shitakuryô*), removal expenses (*tentakuryô*), arrival allowances (*chakkô teate*), special leave granted during the period of the move, and assistance with the management or disposal of the property being vacated.

Disturbance allowances are designed to compensate the employee for the miscellaneous but unaccounted costs of the move and for associated inconvenience. According to the Industrial Labour Survey Institute's 1989 surveys, 45.5% of private companies with 1,000 or more employees pay this allowance as a fixed sum determined by the rank of the employee, while another 40.7% base payments upon a percentage of the employee's salary (Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, 1990, p. 72). According to a survey

conducted three years earlier by the Labour Administration Research Institute, a quarter (25.6%) of all companies which pay a disturbance allowance also link the value of that allowance either to the region into which the transferee is to move or to the distance to be traversed, a proportion which rises to exactly one third in the case of the largest companies, those with 3,000 or more employees (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1986, pp. 36-38). Actual removal expenses, including tickets for the transferee and his family and the cost of moving household effects, are normally covered separately by the employer, either in full and based upon the actual costs involved or, in the case of around half of the companies questioned by both sources, according to a formula limiting the maximum amount payable.

Arrival allowances are paid to compensate the transferee for the cost of any temporary accommodation that may prove necessary at the destination while the property set aside for the transferee's subsequent use is made ready for occupation. It is inevitable that even in the best coordinated of "simultaneous" chains, random delays in the vacating of houses and apartments, plus the time required to ensure proper cleaning and maintenance, let alone the problems caused by physically transporting the employee, his family and their worldly goods, will cause bottlenecks that can only be resolved by temporarily expanding the supply of accommodation available through the use of hotels or lodging houses. Not surprisingly, therefore, the great majority of companies (89.2% according to the Industrial Labour Survey Institute's 1989 survey) pay an arrival allowance as and when necessary, although most impose a limit of between three and seven days (Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, 1990, p. 67; Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1986, p. 31). Delays of this type also have knock-on effects with regard to the ability of the employee to assume the new post precisely on time, and this is normally catered for by the granting of special leave during the period of the move. According to the Industrial Labour Survey Institute's 1989 survey, for example, some 88.0% of private companies grant special leave to those transferees who have opted to take their families with them, the mean duration of such leave being 5.1 days (Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, 1990, p. 103).

When accommodation vacated as a result of a transfer is owned by the employer or by a private landlord, the subsequent use of that property need be of no further concern to the transferee. When the transferee is also the owner, however, the fate of the property will be a very real concern, and one that may even affect the employee's willingness to move if it is not dealt with properly. For this reason, many employers provide a range of services to home owners to aid their mobility, services which are geared to two scenarios: that in which the employee is unlikely to return later on to the same location, and thus has little reason to retain his former home, and that in which his absence is expected to be temporary, in which case the problem is to manage the property while he is away.

The former scenario is the less common, since it is more likely to arise from the restructuring of the organization itself than from conventional job rotation. Nevertheless, many employers do provide assistance with the cost of selling a home, although there are normally restrictions on the level of support, and barely 1% of even the largest companies operate schemes to purchase property directly from employees (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1986, pp. 46-47). Sale arrangements may pose only minor difficulties in healthy housing markets, but they can be a severe impediment to mobility in less favoured locations. If we refer back to the case of the Kamaishi steelworks, for example, of the 250 permanent transfers (*haichi tenkan*) required under the Fourth Rationalization Plan, 128 involved home-owners, of whom only 14 were able to sell their homes, despite assistance from their employer (Wiltshire, 1992, p. 74).

Such difficulties do not arise, however, in the case of transferees who seek to retain their own homes for subsequent use. Under these circumstances many employers offer assistance in locating tenants to occupy the property during the transferee's absence, or run schemes which ensure that the property is properly guarded and maintained. According to the Industrial Labour Survey Institute's 1989 survey, 59.2% of private companies make at least some provision for the management of vacant private homes (Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, 1990, p. 70), and the results of the Labour Administration Research Institute survey suggest that such provision is strongly linked to company size, since 72.7% of companies with 3,000 or more employees take an active role in this area (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1986, pp. 46-47). Property rental and maintenance is a specialized business, however, which offers an opportunity for third party intervention. Hence, while 42.7% of companies included in the Industrial Labour Survey Institute's survey ran property management schemes themselves, 21.4% subcontracted this function to specialist agencies, and a further 6.8% relied upon subsidiaries established for this purpose.

7.5 Summary of Chapter 7

Most Japanese employers offer assistance to transferees in obtaining housing for themselves and their families, and much of this assistance resembles measures common in other developed economies, particularly those discussed in the previous section. The distinctive characteristic of the Japanese case, however, is the extent to which employers are directly involved in the ownership or effective control of the housing stock occupied by transferees. While this situation has come about in part as a consequence of historical circumstances, it also represents a logical solution (from the employer's point of view at least) to the problem of ensuring that the enforcement of transfers required for the effective conduct of business is not undermined by friction in the housing market. For the past two decades company housing (however defined) has been a declining sector of the

housing stock, but it has more than maintained its importance as an aid to mobility within internal labour markets. Indeed, during the late 1980s, when property inflation in metropolitan Japan priced many potential home-owners out of the market, reducing mobility out of company housing amongst the higher age groups, many companies were forced to think again about direct provision, which accounts in part for the upturn in construction recorded in Table 7.4. There is nothing inevitable about such involvement, however, and the secular shift away from company-owned housing in favour of leased accommodation reveals that employers continue to adapt to evolving conditions in the housing and labour markets.

Little has been said in this chapter about the preferences of the transferees themselves, yet ultimately the decision to accept a particular form of accommodation lies with the transferee and his family, not with the employer. This can be seen most clearly in circumstances when residential mobility is constrained by factors beyond the employer's control, and when the employee must therefore find a means of reconciling the conflicting claims of his employer and his family life. In Japan the resolution of this conflict often takes a distinctive form, that of "living apart from the family", as we shall see in the next chapter.

Chapter 8 *Tanshin Funin*: Partial Residential Migration of Transferees

8.1 Introduction

For most managerial staff in large Japanese organizations, and for many other workers besides, personnel transfers between distant locations are both obligatory and frequent. Many transferees face difficulties, however, in reconciling the need for mobility in the world of work with domestic responsibilities, and opt for a compromise: *tanshin funin*, a form of partial residential migration, in which the transferee leaves his family behind for the duration of the posting. The partial migration of these "business bachelors" causes a temporary fission of households and raises living costs, such as those of maintaining two separate residences on a long term basis. It also imposes social and psychological strains for all members of the family.

There is widespread consensus amongst both employers and transferees that this compromise is inherently undesirable and to be discouraged wherever possible (Honda, 1988, and Section 8.4 below). The Japanese media are forever publishing accounts of the difficulties which families have to overcome in the father's absence, or the perils of the single life, tales which find a receptive audience in a country where the solidarity of the family is a traditional virtue. It is also generally recognized, however, that for many households there is no reasonable alternative, and therefore appropriate measures to reduce the associated costs of partial migration are required. In this chapter we will examine four major aspects of partial migration in Japan: its incidence, its causes, its temporal and spatial characteristics, and the steps taken by major employing organizations to cope with it.

The phenomenon of voluntarily living apart from one's family is by no means unique to Japan: Johnson and Salt (1990, pp. 3-4), for example, point to an increasing incidence of commuting on a weekly rather than a daily basis in the United Kingdom. The Japanese case is particularly significant, however, because of the high proportion of transferees who choose to adapt in this way, and in the light of what is by international standards a wealth of documentation. We should note at the outset, however, that while the surveys to be examined here address the proximate causes of partial migration, they rather take for granted some of the broader structural constraints upon migration in Japan which appear far more striking from a distance. We shall note some of these constraints, such as the importance attached to formal education, at appropriate points in the text.

Two deserve to be mentioned at the outset, however. First, notwithstanding what has just been said about the undesirability of partial migration, the fact remains that large

numbers of Japanese families are reconciled to it. While Johnson and Salt (*ibid.*, p. 3) consider equivalent behaviour in the United Kingdom to be an extreme case, in Japan this is just not so. It is commonplace and, for a variety of complex reasons, it is also comparatively acceptable. Too close an inspection of these underlying causes would draw us far away from the main thrust of this thesis, into realms such as the expression of loyalties to home and work and gender differences in roles within Japanese families. The point to be made, however, is that for whatever reasons, the idea of splitting up a household on a voluntary and temporary basis is well established in Japanese society. And second, for managerial staff in particular, the sheer predictability of transfers - the certainty of a return to Tôkyô after two or three years in a local branch, for example - reduces uncertainty about how long a particular commitment to partial migration is likely to last, and thereby facilitates an appropriate response at the household level.

8.2 The incidence and causes of partial migration

Statistics on partial migration have been available in reasonable abundance since the early 1980s, when it first emerged as a source of popular concern on account of its disruptive effect upon family life. Estimates of the overall incidence of partial migration vary according to the survey methods used, but most sources suggest that between one fifth and one third of all married transferees opt to live apart from their families for the duration of their posting. For example, a survey undertaken in mid-1988 by the Labour Administration Research Institute found that in a representative sample of private companies with 500 or more employees, 32.5% of employees with families who had been transferred during the year preceding the survey elected to undertake partial migration (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1988, p.36). The Ministry of Labour's periodic Survey of Employment Trends (Koyô Dôkô Chôsa) suggests a somewhat lower figure than this: it reveals that during 1985, for example, around 20% of transfers of individuals with families in companies with 1,000 or more employees resulted in partial rather than full residential migration (Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, 1990, p. 67). Fewer data are available for public sector employees, but a survey undertaken by the Personnel Management Agency covering the calendar year 1984 reveals that some 25.7% of public servants with dependents who were transferred during that year and changed their places of residence undertook partial migration (Jinjiin, 1985, p. 16).

According to the Personnel Management Agency, partial migration affected well over 7,000 new transferees during 1984 in the public sector alone. The absolute incidence of partial migration in the private sector is much greater: the best estimate available comes from another Ministry of Labour survey, which shows that as of December 31, 1986 there were around 175,000 employees living apart from their families within Japan (Rôsei Jihô, 1987, p. 45). If we assume a mean transfer period of three years, then we

may infer that around 60,000 new partial migrations take place each year in Japanese companies.

There is a widespread perception that the incidence of *tanshin funin* is on the increase, but there is no statistical evidence to bear this out over the long term, since data have only been collected over the past decade, and sequential surveys conducted during this period actually reveal little change other than that which can be attributed to sampling error. There are good reasons to assume that there has been a secular drift in favour of partial migration, however, because of the intimate relationship between its underlying causes and various long term trends in Japanese society.

Most surveys agree on what the underlying causes of partial migration actually are. For example, consider the results of a recent survey of large private companies undertaken in 1990, in which employees who had undertaken partial migration were asked to state the reasons why they had chosen this course. No fewer than 85.1% cited reasons relating to the education of their children: for 63.2%, educational matters were the most important single factor, well ahead of any other cause (Rôdô Seisaku Chôsabû, 1991, p. 46-47). Similarly, in an earlier survey undertaken on behalf of the Labour Ministry in 1984 amongst white-collar workers in private companies, 55.9% of respondents cited educational reasons for migrating alone (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1985, p. 37). These and other surveys confirm that concerns over education far outweigh any other single cause of partial residential migration in Japan.

There are also marked similarities between these and other surveys regarding the lesser causes of partial migration. Problems associated with home ownership rank second as a significant factor in both the 1990 survey (cited by 39.6% of respondents) and the 1984 survey (cited by 29.3%), while other causes cited by more than ten per cent of respondents include difficulties associated with the care and mobility of elderly parents (cited by 23.1% in 1990 and 14.6% in 1984), housing problems at the destination (cited by 13.0% in 1990 and 18.4% in 1984), and difficulties associated with the spouse's employment (cited by 10.4% of respondents in 1990 and 9.2% in 1984).

These causal factors have two things in common. First, as already indicated, each is linked to underlying trends in Japanese society, which suggests that an increase in the incidence of partial migration may have occurred over the longer term. And second, each can be expected to affect older transferees more heavily than younger ones.

The arguments regarding long-term trends were summarized in a perceptive report published in the early 1980s (Seisansei Rôshi Kaigi Henshûbu, 1983), which noted the following linkages. First, the significance attached to educational factors in the decision

to undertake partial migration stems from the importance of the entrance examinations which must be passed before access can be obtained to the more desirable schools at each level in the education system. This, combined with procedural differences between school systems in different parts of Japan, encourages families to stay put and avoid disruption to the childrens' education, particularly once their offspring are in their teens. Over time, the increasing proportion of children in the relevant age cohorts going on to higher levels of education is likely to have encouraged more families to consider the partial migration option.

Japanese employers attach enormous importance to the formal educational background of prospective recruits. We have already noted the importance of the former imperial universities as conduits into the higher reaches of the Japanese bureaucracy, and similar considerations apply in most sectors of the economy. This alone puts families under very heavy pressure to ensure the smoothest possible progression through the school system for their children, and under other circumstances this would present a barrier to migration of any kind. In the Japanese case, however, it is quite usual for mothers to assume exclusive responsibility within the household for the education of their children - occasionally to the point of obsession. A consequence of this is that the temporary absence of the father of the house is far less disruptive of "normal" family life than would be the case in many other countries, which in turn renders partial migration more acceptable as a solution.

Second, home ownership is an impediment to full household migration, because owners are reluctant to expose themselves to the risk of difficulties with tenants, who enjoy very strong protection under Japanese law, and because empty properties are vulnerable to theft and decay. The diffusion of home ownership, a benefit now enjoyed by more than 60% of Japanese households (a proportion not far short of that for home owners in the United Kingdom), and which most large employers have actively promoted over the past three decades, has exposed increasing numbers of transferee households to this sort of dilemma. Simultaneously, rising expectations with regard to the quality of housing are likely to have fuelled dissatisfaction with the types of accommodation normally on offer to transferees at the destination, particularly once owner occupation has been achieved.

Third, the unwillingness or inability of elderly dependant relatives to move when their children are transferred is combined with the fear of what may happen to them in their children's absence to create a powerful incentive for partial migration, with the spouse (normally the wife) left behind to care not only for her own children but for her in-laws as well. Over time, the number of households confronting this kind of problem

has undoubtedly increased, as a consequence of the general ageing of the Japanese population.

And fourth, although "career women" are still a distinct minority in Japan, their numbers have increased rapidly in recent years, thereby raising the incidence of difficulties over whose career should be sacrificed in the face of a transfer, and the incentive for partial migration as a compromise solution.

Table 8.1 Transferees with dependents who opted to undertake partial migration (*tanshin funin*) by age, Japan, 1984 and 1986

Unit: % of transferees with dependents in each age group

	Public sector, 1984	Private sector, 1986
Age		
under 25	0.8	(8.3
25-29	2.6	(
30-34	4.1	11.0
35-39	8.9	19.6
40-44	24.0	35.4
45-49	44.5	48.6
50-54	41.2	(
55 and over	32.7	(54.1

Notes: Private sector figures not available for subdivisions of the under 30 and 50 and over age groups. For details of the surveys concerned, see Appendix A.

Sources: Jinjiin (1985), p. 16 for the public sector, and Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1986, p. 53 for the private sector.

The combined effect of these causal factors has been to impose a very distinctive age structure upon partial migrants, particularly in comparison with transferees who have opted instead to take their families with them. Data from a 1986 survey of transferees in private sector companies with 1,000 or more employees and a 1984 survey of transferees in the public sector are shown in Table 8.1, and reveal quite clearly that in both sectors, partial migration is of only minor importance for employees in their 20s and 30s, but of major importance once they reach their 40s and, in the private sector at least, it is the dominant form amongst transferees who have reached their 50s. The public sector survey found that 92.6% of partial migrants were age 40 or over, compared with only 56.4% of transferees with families who undertook full residential migration (Jinjiin, 1985, p. 16). Similarly, the private sector survey found that 81.8% of partial migrants were age 40 or over, compared with only 38.5% of transferees in general (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1986, p. 53). In short, partial migration is a characteristic of older transferees and their families.

It is not simply age, however, that causes employees to opt for partial migration later in life, but rather the responsibilities that go with it. In the previous chapter, we noted the strong relationship that exists between age and home ownership, and a higher incidence of dependent elderly relatives may be considered biologically inevitable amongst older transferee households. As for the link to education, which is the primary motive behind most partial migration, a clear illustration is provided by a survey of large companies undertaken in 1990, the results of which are shown in Table 8.2, and which reveal very sharp differences in patterns of school attendance between the children of partial migrants and those of transferees who have taken their families with them. The difference is most extreme for households with children in secondary education: 43.0% of partial migrants have one or more children currently attending senior high school, compared with just 6.1% of transferees who have undertaken full residential migration.

Table 8.2 Transferees with children by the type of educational institution attended by those children at the time of transfer, Japan, 1990

Unit: % of transferees with at least one child in the institution indicated

	Transferees who left their families behind	Transferees who took their families with them
Educational institutions		
Pre-school age	12.0	48.9
Elementary school, years 1-3	16.0	25.3
Elementary school, years 4-6	33.7	24.7
Junior high school	41.2	15.1
Senior high school	43.0	6.1
Tertiary education	21.3	1.1

Note: For details of the surveys concerned, see Appendix A.
Source: Extracted from Rôdô Seisaku Chôsabû, 1991, p. 47.

8.3 The temporal and spatial characteristics of partial migration

In Chapter 4 we explored some of the temporal rhythms and spatial patterns associated with personnel transfers in general, without reference to whether the associated migrations were full or partial. In some respects this distinction need not matter: it is unlikely, for example, that the duration of transfers is any different between the two types, and there is no evidence that transferees posted at certain times of year are more likely to move with their families than those posted at other times - despite attempts referred to in the next section to harmonize the timing of transfers to the school calendar.

Partial migration does introduce an additional temporal dimension, however, in that the transferee must now decide how often (if at all) he is to return home during the period of the transfer. Most surveys agree that one return trip home per month is the norm, a pattern encouraged by the provision of travel allowances by many employers (of which again more below) which limit payments to a maximum of twelve journeys per year, and also agree that most such journeys are made at weekends. Periodicities of return journeys are influenced by other factors as well, however, of which one of the most important would appear to be geographical distance.

Table 8.3 Frequency of trips home by transferees who had opted to undertake partial migration (*tanshin funin*), by distance between home and location of posting, Japan, 1988

Unit: % of partial migrant transferees

	More than once a month	Once a month	Less than once a month
Distance			
Below 200km	85.4	10.5	4.1
200-400km	55.2	35.9	8.9
400-600km	55.7	36.8	7.5
Above 600 km	17.3	48.9	33.8
Total	53.2	34.0	12.8

Source: Extracted from Yûseishô, 1988, p. 68.

Evidence in support of this contention comes from a survey conducted in 1988 by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, which covered a sample of partial migrants employed by private companies (Yûseishô, 1988). The results are shown in Table 8.3, and demonstrate a strong inverse relationship between the distance of the transfer (as measured by the distance between the transferee's permanent home and his temporary abode) and the frequency of return trips. The further one is transferred, the less frequently one returns home, presumably for reasons of time and cost.

Table 8.3 suggests the possibility that the incidence of partial migration possesses a distinctive geography. Short distance transfers create opportunities for return trips which are denied to long distance migrants, and which reduce the social and psychological costs of separation. This in turn may make partial migration a more attractive proposition for short distance transferees, whereas those required to move greater distances may be more inclined to take their families with them. Surprisingly however, and despite a wealth of

published information on most aspects of partial migration, the relationship (if any) between distance and the incidence of partial migration has never been investigated, and for the moment at least we may do no more than speculate. Furthermore, the attractions of frequent trips home for short distance partial migrants must be weighed against the increasing possibility of substituting commuting for migration, particularly between Japan's major centres of population, which would have a countervailing and depressing effect upon the volume of partial migration over shorter distances.

In any event, the most distinctive characteristic of the geography of personnel transfers identified in Chapter 4 was not a link between the incidence of transfers and distance, (what evidence there is suggests that there is very little relationship between the two, beyond the effect of internal labour market boundaries), but the strong hierarchical relationship between transfers and settlement size. Unfortunately, however, there are few useful data available on partial migration and settlement size, at least as far as the private sector is concerned. The Labour Management Research Institute's 1988 survey does contain limited information on the geographical distribution of partial migrants: it found that 23.4% of transferees currently living apart from their families were located in Tôkyô, 14.4% lived in Ôsaka and 7.1% in Nagoya, a combined total of 44.9% living in Japan's three largest metropolitan regions (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1988, p. 37). Yet it is difficult to interpret this result, because the survey report gives no indication of how these metropolitan regions have been defined, nor are comparable figures provided for transferees who have taken their families with them.

The paucity of data for the private sector is matched by the public sector, but with one important exception. The report of the 1984 survey by the Personnel Management Agency does provide a coarse breakdown of the location of employment of transferees according to hierarchical status (defined both administratively and geographically) and by whether migration was partial or involved the entire family. The breakdown, which covers administrative grades only, reveals that 27.2% of civil servants in these grades who had been transferred from one place to another during 1984, and who had at least one dependent, left their families behind and undertook partial migration. Amongst those who were employed within a ministerial headquarters after their move, however, the equivalent proportion was much lower: just 8.3% had undertaken partial migration. Whether they have brought their families with them, or have simply been reunited with their families after a spell of partial migration, most transferees arriving in (or more likely returning to) the national capital subsequently live together with their families. The same cannot be said, however, of officials transferred in the opposite direction, and particularly of those taking up the more senior posts (at section chief and above) in provincial bureaux of central ministries: according to the survey report, some 40.6% of such transferees had chosen to live apart from their families, as had 49.1% of individuals

entering prefectural bureaucracies at senior levels (Jinjiin, 1985, p. 17). The conclusion to be drawn, therefore, is that a high proportion of public sector transferees (and especially older transferees) moving between the national capital and the rest of Japan leave their families behind in Tôkyô for the duration of their provincial postings. This result is scarcely surprising, given that the more senior posts in every Ministry are concentrated in the national capital, which means that a provincial posting at this level is more than likely to be followed by another headquarters job. The same logic also applies for senior figures in large private sector organizations, but again, there are no data available with which to prove a similar outcome.

8.4 Mobility policies and partial migration

The high incidence of partial migration, the real costs associated with it, the adverse publicity that it has attracted in the Japanese media over the past decade, and pressures from company unions seeking redress for their members have combined to encourage major employers to develop specific policies to cope with *tanshin funin* and its effects. In developing these policies, however, employers have been forced to come to terms with an important and inherent contradiction, which is that the greater the assistance offered to persons who choose to migrate alone, so the more attractive that option becomes. A delicate balance must be struck, therefore, between assisting those who have little choice but to undertake partial migration on the one hand, and increasing the attractiveness of alternatives such as full residential mobility on the other.

The great majority of private companies - some 80.4% according to the Labour Administration Research Institute - subscribe to the principle that full migration along with the family is inherently preferable to the partial solution, and a small minority (4.2%) refuse to give any assistance to *tanshin funinsha* unless they have left their families behind specifically at the employer's behest (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1988, p. 15). Most, however, do offer at least some assistance to partial migrants, and amongst the larger employers the adoption of the more popular measures is almost universal. Furthermore, when assistance is offered on a conditional basis, the criteria that employees must satisfy are closely attuned to the major underlying causes of partial migration, which helps to ensure that only genuine applications get through. Hence, when asked to specify under what conditions assistance is provided (and with multiple answers permitted), 74.1% of companies in the Industrial Labour Research Institute's 1989 survey cited difficulties over education, 67.0% cited illness in the family (and 52.5% pregnancy), 57.2% offered help to employees with elderly and immobile relatives, 46.1% considered problems with the spouse's employment, and 45.8% took owner occupation into account (Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, 1990, p. 73).

Table 8.4 Measures available to employers to cope with partial migration (*tanshin funin*)

Measures to assist employees with the costs of partial migration

- Economic assistance
 - Separation allowances
 - Assistance in the cost of periodic home visits
 - Provisions for other expenses
- Assistance with housing
 - Provision of accommodation in company-owned facilities
 - Consent to dual occupation of company housing/dormitory accommodation
 - Rent subsidies
 - Housing allowances
- Measures to ease the living conditions of partial migrants
 - Schemes for health management
 - Schemes for health checks prior to posting
 - Guidance on cooking, leisure time etc.
 - Publication of guidebooks for partial migrants
 - Schemes for counselling *tanshin funin* transferees
- Measures to ease living conditions for the families left behind
 - Schemes for counselling the families left behind
- Measures to encourage family reunions
 - Schemes for the granting of special leave to partial migrants

Measures to reduce the incidence of partial migration

- Measures to encourage migration of the entire family
 - Measures for owner occupiers
 - Schemes for renting out employees' homes
 - Schemes for managing employee's homes while vacant
 - Schemes for facilitating house sales
 - Provision of company-owned housing
 - Measures for assistance with education
 - Help with the cost of changing schools
 - Assistance in the acquisition of boarding or dormitory accommodation for children
 - Measures to assist spouses to find jobs
 - Provision of information on housing opportunities
 - Clarification of transfer procedures
 - Synchronization of transfers with the school year
 - Extending the period between announcement and implementation of a posting
 - Clarification of the basis of selection for transfers
 - Schemes to encourage transferees to summon their families later on
- Clarification of the employment system
 - New transfer systems
 - Schemes for stays of implementation of transfers
 - Schemes for selecting the location of the final place of employment
 - New employment systems
 - Schemes for limiting the range of transfers (regional employment systems)

Source: Simplified from Zensen Dômei (1984), p. 9.

Employers may choose from a very wide range of specific measures with which either to assist partial migrants or to promote the alternatives: a clear indication of this range is given in Table 8.4. In this section we will focus in particular upon those measures which have been most widely deployed in practice, as well as those which have a specifically geographical expression.

Consider first the means by which employers may compensate employees for the additional costs of partial migration. Direct economic assistance can take three forms, of which the most widely used is the monthly "separation allowance" (*bekkyo teate*, sometimes known as the *tanshin funin teate*), which is normally granted either as a fixed sum or on a sliding scale related to rank, with a distance-related component often built in as well (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1988, p. 24). The evidence from sequential surveys undertaken by the Labour Administration Research Institute shows not only how widespread the payment of this allowance is, but also how quickly its use has spread - from less than 50% of companies surveyed in 1972 to around 70% in 1981 and 84.5% in 1988 (*ibid.*, p. 3). Some companies limit the period over which the allowance is payable, in order to encourage full residential migration, but according to the Industrial Labour Survey Institute, around two thirds of companies offer a completely open-ended commitment (Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, 1990, p. 74). As for the value of this allowance, calculations by the Asahi Insurance Company published in 1990 suggest an average separation allowance of ¥27,680 per month for a typical 40 year old section chief. To put this figure into perspective, the same calculations suggest that if this man had a wife and two children, and had left them in Tôkyô during a posting to Ôsaka, the additional monthly bill attributable to partial migration would be ¥87,728. In other words, the separation allowance would cover just under a third of the additional cost (*ibid.*, p. 150).

Another major cost item is that of periodic trips home, and the majority of companies now offer at least some assistance with fares. The Industrial Labour Survey Institute's research suggests that by 1989 67.7% of companies were prepared to reimburse their employee's travel expenses, more than double the proportion of a decade earlier. There were limits to employers' largesse, however: 51.7% of companies were found to restrict payments to one return trip per month, and a further 20.9% to two trips per month. The Asahi Insurance calculations suggest a mean monthly travel subsidy of ¥23,600, hardly generous in comparison with an average additional fares bill of ¥32,664 per month for such journeys. The problem of cost is compounded by that of time: the fact that most trips home are made at weekends can be attributed to the willingness of less than a fifth of companies to offer special leave for family reunions (or *ichiji kisei kyûka*: *ibid.*, pp. 74, 103). As with the separation allowance, therefore, financial provisions for return travel (*ichiji kisei kôtsûhi*) are hardly such as to provide an incentive for partial migration.

Many employers also take specific steps to ameliorate the housing problems faced by partial migrants. According to the Labour Administration Research Institute's 1988 survey, 86.1% of partial migrants at that time were living in accommodation made available by their employers, with 53.1% living in apartments or dormitory rooms leased from private landlords, 25.6% living in ordinary company-owned dormitories, and 7.4% in dormitories set aside for exclusive use by partial migrants (*tanshin funinsha senyôryô*:

Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1988, p. 37). A survey by the Housing Research and Advancement Foundation found that in 1989 25.7% of Japanese companies either owned or had leased dedicated accommodation for *tanshin funin* personnel, with the level of provision strongly linked to company size: amongst firms with 5,000 or more employees, 49.5% had set aside at least some accommodation for exclusive use by partial migrants (Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentô, 1989, pp. 14-15). Other employers made available rent subsidies or housing allowances as an alternative to direct provision.

Nevertheless, most partial migrants do face higher accommodation costs, because they must still pay rent on their temporary second home, even if it is located in a subsidised company housing block. And when the family itself is living in company housing, the difficulties faced by the potential partial migrant may be even greater, since over a third of Japanese companies do not allow their employees tenure of more than one company owned residence at the same time (Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, 1990, p. 70). Employer intervention in the housing market, therefore, can hardly be said to have been a major stimulus to an increase (real or perceived) in the incidence of partial migration.

As for measures designed (in whole or in part) to reduce the incidence of partial migration, of all the options listed in Table 8.4 those geared to aiding the mobility of owner occupiers have been the most widely adopted. We have already discussed this matter in some depth in Chapter 7, in the broader context of housing problems facing transferees in general, and there is little to add to that discussion that is specific to partial migrants. Of the other measures to encourage full household migration listed in Table 8.4, those which address the education issue would appear (on the surface at least) to be the most relevant, since they address the major underlying cause of partial migration. The periodic surveys undertaken by the Labour Relations Research Institute show that the proportion of companies offering assistance with educational expenses doubled between 1977 and 1988, to just under 40% of the total. Financial assistance with the costs of changing schools (to cover differences in fees, new uniforms etc.) rather misses the point, however, since it is the qualities and entry policies of schools that are of concern to parents, not the charges levied, and these are matters which individual employers cannot control.

Survey evidence suggests that none of the other measures to encourage full household migration included in Table 8.4 have been widely implemented by Japanese companies. There are three additional types of scheme listed in the table, however, which have rather different effects, and which approach the problem in a different way, through the manipulation of time and geographical space, in order to reduce uncertainty, suppress *tanshin funin* as such, and hasten the substitution of commuting for residential migration.

None has been widely implemented as yet, but each offers considerable potential as a means of diverting potential partial migrants towards other forms of behaviour.

Under the first of these schemes, prospective transferees are allowed to postpone moves for an agreed period (of months or years), generally so that the children's education is not disrupted at a critical point. The result may well be a delay in promotion for the individual concerned, and the geographical effect will be the substitution of temporary residential immobility for partial migration. Eventually, however, the normal pattern of mobility is resumed. This is not the case with the second of these schemes, in which the location of the final place of employment (and hence the place of retirement) is agreed some years in advance, thereby distorting the geography of transfer activity towards the end of an individual's career. The advantage of such a scheme is that the employee can plan his participation in the land market with confidence, and establish a stable base from which either to commute or to depart temporarily with his family, secure in the knowledge of an eventual return home. On the face of it, however, this scheme may actually encourage employees to undertake partial migration, since it takes no account of the primary reason for *tanshin funin*, the education factor, which is likely to play a role in the selection of the "home base". Unfortunately, however, given the low level of diffusion of this scheme, there is insufficient evidence available from which to calculate what its net effect on mobility patterns has actually been.

Far more attention has been devoted, both in actual practice and in the media, to the third type of scheme, which is generally known as a "regional employment" or "regional employee" system (*gentei kinmu chisei*). While the details differ greatly between individual companies, the usual practice is for the employer to designate a number of regionally and/or hierarchically defined "courses" or career tracks, among which employees may move at their own request but in accordance with a set of predetermined rules. The idea of defining regionally differentiated internal labour markets is by no means new, and is in fact common practice amongst large employers. The novelty, however, lies in the ability to move from one course to another, an innovation which started to become popular from the early 1980s onwards, and for reasons linked not only to partial migration, but also to emerging labour shortages and the increasing desire of young people to confine their lives to their home localities (a manifestation of the "U-Turn Phenomenon" to which we referred in Chapter 1).

A recent review of regional employment systems as implemented by twelve of Japan's leading companies (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1989) reveals that the number of courses may vary from two to as many as six or more, between which in most cases employees may switch in either direction, although some employers limit the number of times this can be done, and set quotas on the maximum number of people who can be

accepted on a particular course. A typical example is the retail chain Nagasakiya, which operates three courses: N, the national course, within which unlimited transfers may take place, Z, the zonal course, in which transfers are restricted to a designated region of Japan, and H, the home course, in which changes in the place of employment are restricted to a single commuting area. Employees may switch between these courses on just one day each year, to simplify the administrative arrangements, and are allowed only one switch in a three year period. Furthermore, the numbers permitted access to the Z and H courses are carefully controlled: in 1988, of the company's 5,600 regular employees, around 2,200 were on the N course, 600 were on the Z course, and the remainder were on the H course. It is rather unusual for the majority of a company's employees to be allowed to participate on lower course like this: in most of the twelve companies covered in the survey, regional employees constituted less than 30% of the total (ibid., pp. 7-9; see also Anon., 1985).

Whatever the precise details of a particular scheme, however, the overall effect is the same: commuting is substituted for migration, and the employee is afforded a measure of spatial stability, but at the expense (either temporary or permanent) of vertical mobility within the organization concerned. Given the tensions upon individual employees which otherwise stimulate so much partial migration, the attractions of regional employment schemes are obvious. For the company concerned, however, there are costs to be faced, not only in terms of the disruption to free internal labour market operations, but also in the loss of training (and widening of horizons) that would otherwise be extended to workers who have opted out of the national system. These costs may help to explain why it is that by 1989 only 5.6% of Japanese companies had introduced any kind of regional employment system which permitted switches between courses (Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, 1989, p. 3). Given this low level of implementation, the impact of regional employment systems upon the volume of partial migration flows remains unclear.

In conclusion, we may say that while most large employers in Japan have at least some sort of policy to cope with partial migration, consisting of measures either to reduce the costs associated with leaving the family behind or to encourage alternative behaviour, care is usually taken to ensure that *tanshin funin* is not inadvertently encouraged through inappropriate subsidies. What is not clear, however, is how effective these measures have actually been in practice. In principle, the largest employers are best placed to implement suitable policies, and this is borne out to some extent by an early Labour Ministry survey, which found that while companies with 100-299 employees had adopted an average of 2.8 measures to cope with partial migration, the equivalent figure for companies with 5,000 or more employees was 4.9 measures (Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, 1985, p. 21). Whether it was as a result of these measures or not is unclear, but the same survey did find a clear negative relationship between company size and the percentage of

transferees who had undertaken partial migration at some point: for companies with 100-299 employees, the figure was 37.3% of transferees, but for companies with 5,000 or more employees, only 28.1% (ibid., p. 36). In other words, the larger the company, the more likely it is that an employee will be in a position to choose an option other than partial migration.

8.5 Summary of Chapter 8

Many Japanese transferees, and especially workers in their forties and fifties, opt to "live apart from the family" for extended periods, giving rise to a large floating population of so-called "business bachelors". The primary reasons for this behaviour are now well known, and combine domestic difficulties, especially those relating to the needs of children and older relatives, with rigidities in the housing market. Although many employers would prefer not to encourage partial migration by heads of households, most nevertheless recognize the inevitability of *tanshin funin*, and provide at least some assistance with the costs of maintaining dual residences.

An obvious geographical consequence of partial migration is a reduction in the overall volume of interregional migration flows linked to personnel transfers. There are also implications, which lie beyond the orbit of the present thesis, regarding the provision of specialist services at the places of destination to transferees who now have to satisfy many day-to-day needs without the immediate support of the home environment. Beyond this, however, and some empirical evidence pointing to a bias in favour of provincial destinations, the geography of partial migration remains obscure. An appropriate strategy for increasing our understanding of this subject cannot be divorced, however, from the broader research agenda for studies of the spatial structure of mobility in Japanese internal labour markets and the links between such mobility and residential migration - to which we may now turn our attention.

Chapter 9 Conclusions and Agenda for Research

9.1 Introduction

In this final chapter we summarize the main conclusions of the work reported in the thesis, and set down an agenda for future research. We examine the extent to which the objectives of the thesis have been met, identify the main consequences for our understanding of the Japanese case and of personnel transfer systems in general, and discuss how some of the weaknesses of the present research may be overcome.

9.2 Conclusions to the thesis

We may begin by recalling the central objective of the thesis, as set out in Chapter 1, which has been "to identify and explain those characteristics of personnel transfers in Japan which have a bearing on the interregional migration of population". These characteristics fall into six major and closely interrelated groups: the frequency of occurrence of transfers, the concentration of transfers in particular sectors and amongst particular groups of workers, a multiplicity of transfer types, marked geographical regularities, employer involvement in housing provision for transferees, and the importance of the partial migration solution.

9.2.1 Frequency of occurrence

It is clear from the discussion in Chapters 1-3 that personnel transfers are a common phenomenon in Japan, and that for managerial staff in large Japanese organizations and for many other workers besides, transfers between distant locations are both obligatory and frequent. This has resulted in the institutionalization of interregional transfers as a normal part of Japanese working life, along with the residential mobility that changes in the location of employment often necessitate. As a result, transfers are the leading cause of interregional residential migration in Japan, and account for more than half of all moves which can be attributed to employment-related factors. The leading role performed by transfers is also an important reason why interregional migration in Japan is so "inefficient" in the technical sense, causing little net change in the underlying distribution of population. The fact that transfers have a major impact upon migration patterns is largely accidental, however, for it is not the function of personnel management systems to bring about changes in population distributions, but rather, opportunities for migration appear as an incidental but often inevitable result of normal operating practices.

Transfers are common in Japan because of the presence of many large multiregional organizations which depend upon internal labour markets to meet their staffing requirements. Japanese employers turn to internal labour markets for the same reasons as employers anywhere else: to make investments in human capital, to tap skills specific to the organization concerned which are unavailable on the external market, and to foster cooperative attitudes amongst the workforce. What distinguishes the Japanese case is the strength of this commitment to internal promotion, a commitment enshrined in the so-called "lifetime employment system".

It is true that the "lifetime employment system" covers only a minority of the Japanese workforce: we may recall the estimate of up to 30% of the workforce given by Abegglen and Stalk (1985, p. 201), which itself overstates the population at risk. It is not just the number of workers who are liable to be transferred that matters, however, but also the frequency with which each individual is moved from one post to another. The evidence presented in Chapters 3 and 5 suggests that managerial staff in particular can expect to move numerous times during their careers, both during the initial years of training and subsequently between rungs on the promotion ladder.

The success of this system depends, however, upon the willingness of workers to uproot themselves at their employers' behest from time to time. Evidence has been provided to show that transfers do not rank highly as a source of irritation amongst Japanese workers - in part because employers shoulder most of the burden of the move, including removal expenses and the cost of seeking accommodation. The main cause of anxiety is the effect of any move upon the education of the transferee's children, and a distinctive form of migration has emerged that attempts to minimize this particular difficulty. The willingness of Japanese workers to comply with transfer orders can be traced to factors such as the security of employment afforded by large organizations, contractual obligations, ambition and the privileges which go with the job, as well as to traditional virtues such as loyalty. The importance of each of these factors will depend upon the individual and upon the circumstances of the transfer. For steelworkers departing from Kamaishi in recent years, security is likely to have been the primary consideration, while for the senior bureaucrats described in Chapter 5 career issues are likely to have been paramount. Agreement to transfers is also actively sought by many employers, whether on an individual basis or through formal negotiations with the company union. There is plenty of evidence that potential transferees are at least consulted to some extent about proposed moves, even if they are contractually obliged to accept the final decision, whatever the outcome.

While transfers are clearly a frequent occurrence in Japan, it is not at all certain that the volume of interregional migration to which they have given rise has increased to any

significant extent in recent years. What appears to have happened is that migration for other reasons has fallen off quite sharply over time, while the volume of transfers has remained fairly steady. Transfer activity is in any event subject to cyclical fluctuations of a complex nature, to which we shall return later on, as well as to secular changes which affect some types of transfers but not others. For example, we may recall the sharp increase in the level of outplacement in the steel industry in recent years described in Chapter 6, or the evidence presented in the same chapter of a marked drop in the number of permanent transfers out of Kamaishi in the 1970s and 1980s, which was due in part to a reduction in employment opportunities at steelworks elsewhere.

9.2.2 Concentration by sectors and groups

Evidence provided in Chapter 3 demonstrates that internal labour market activity and the personnel transfers that result from it are concentrated in particular sectors of the Japanese economy and amongst specific and identifiable groups of workers, findings which come as no surprise given the experience of other developed countries and what is known in general about Japanese employment practices, as described in Chapter 2. As a result, these sectors and groups of workers account for a disproportionate share of interregional migration in Japan.

Both in absolute and relative terms, the largest single employer of transferee migrants is national and local government, while in the private sector companies operating in finance, insurance and real estate are especially prone to moving staff between regions. There is inevitably a strong relationship between company size and the implementation of transfers for both white-collar and blue-collar staff, due both to the concentration of the "lifetime employment system" amongst large employers and to the fact that larger organizations are more likely to have operations at more than one location. Large companies are also the main point of origin for outplacements, although the destinations may well be much smaller concerns.

Not surprisingly, there is a high concentration of managers and executives amongst transferees, as well as of scientific and technical staff. Transferee migrants are generally well educated even by high Japanese standards, which is to be expected given that in Japan a good formal education is the key to entering a better university, graduation from which is in turn the key to obtaining a tenured post with a major employer. Most transferees are men, not only because the "lifetime employment system" is still chiefly a male preserve, but also because some companies deliberately restrict the geographical mobility of their female employees. Transferee migrants are to be found in every working age-group, and indeed, once they reach their 40s Japanese workers are unlikely to move for any reason other than at their employers' behest.

It is also important to note, however, that many transferees do not conform to these stereotypes, a fact which reflects the widespread diffusion of the "lifetime employment system", not only across most sectors of the economy, but also vertically down from management, through other white-collar strata and into many elite blue-collar occupations, through a distinctive process of career systematization described by Koike (1983, p. 38) as "white-collarization".

Another very distinctive feature of internal labour market activity in Japan is the extent to which such markets are segmented within individual organizations between two or more non-competing groups, with senior managers following one career track, local office staff following a second and so forth, with consequences that include both a greater frequency and a greater geographical reach for transfers in some segments than in others, as was demonstrated in the case study presented in Chapter 5. While bureaucratic organizations in both the public and private sectors often employ a common administrative structure that may be described as fractal-like in its replication at successive levels throughout the organization, and while the officials who inhabit each layer of this structure bear similar titles such as "section chief", they operate in what are in effect both hierarchically and geographically separate worlds. This has important consequences for mobility patterns, as we shall see in a later section.

9.2.3 Transfers of many types

The typology presented in Chapter 2 gives some indication of the wide range of forms which transfers can take in Japan, from job rotations and permanent transfers between branches, to outplacements (temporary and permanent) and temporary loans to branches within the same organization or to other organizations entirely. These types often fulfil quite different functions, arise under different circumstances, affect different groups of workers, and can have markedly different geographical consequences. For example, an employer faced with the need to reduce the overall size of the workforce may judge permanent transfers to be appropriate in redeploying younger workers to maximum effect, but may prefer to outplace older workers to subsidiary companies, in the hope of offloading them for good. And while interregional migration caused by job rotations often conforms to hierarchical and geographical regularities linked to settlement size, other types of transfers give rise to migration patterns that are more idiosyncratic and specific to the company or organization concerned, or about which little is known at present.

Variations in the circumstances under which particular types of transfers arise are especially important in the context of cyclical variations in the incidence of transfer

activity. While it is reasonable to suppose that there is some relationship between economic cycles and the implementation of interregional transfers, it is not clear *a priori* whether the expected relationship should be positive or negative, and the empirical evidence presented in Chapter 4 is ambiguous on the matter. Equally, there is no reason why all transfers should conform to the same temporal rhythm, for while employers may find it comparatively easy to implement short-term adjustments in the blue-collar work force, changes in the level of administrative support may take longer to organize. Similarly, under some circumstances it may be possible to take advantage of differences in economic health between sectors: the use of short-term loans from Nippon Steel's Kamaishi works to various automobile manufacturers is an obvious case in point, as was demonstrated in Chapter 6.

The use of short-term loans (whether internal or to other companies) remains a comparatively unexplored issue, yet these loans raise some important questions about how Japanese transfer systems actually operate. For example, in Chapter 2 we employed White's terminology to describe Japanese personnel transfers as "coordinated systems", as indeed most are at the management level, but under the pressures of rapid change it is possible for "loose systems" to develop, in which vacancies are filled rapidly but some individuals remain "in limbo" until a proper job can be found for them. A specific example of this was described in Chapter 6, where loans provided a means for the management at Kamaishi to keep otherwise idle workers occupied, and to avoid more drastic steps in employment reduction. Whereas coordinated systems by their very nature operate according to a strict timetable, loose systems can accommodate substantial time lags between the stimulus which sets a sequence of transfers in motion and the last transfers in that sequence. This in turn would undermine any straightforward correlation between transfer activity and current economic conditions.

At a broader level, the discussions in Chapters 4 and 6 demonstrate the need to place decisions on personnel transfers in the wider context of personnel policies in general and the alternatives available to the organizations concerned. In the case of structural adjustment measures, for example, employers may be able to choose between transfers of various kinds, early retirements, cuts in recruitment, reductions in overtime, and a variety of other measures, any combination of which could be deployed to achieve a given end. Problems associated with staff redeployments in the face of closures and rationalizations are by no means unique to Japan, of course, and the trade-offs to be made between transfers and other adjustment measures remain to be fully addressed at both the conceptual and empirical levels in the geographical literature. One particularly interesting observation made in Chapter 4, for example, is that during periods when companies are anxious to adjust their internal labour supply downwards, the absolute incidence of transfers tends to increase, but transfers become less important in relative terms as a

source of employment adjustment. It was suggested that the reason for this may lie in the fact that in a crisis it is far easier to impose bans on overtime, or to suspend mid-career hirings, than to expand the scale at which personnel transfers are undertaken. Similarly, we saw an example in Chapter 6 of a company which, when faced with considerable difficulties in redeploying workers to its other factories, turned instead to the creation of new enterprises locally with a specific job creation function, an experience that is again by no means unique to Japan.

The typology presented in Chapter 2 also points to broader questions about the definition of personnel transfers and internal labour markets in the Japanese context. At one extreme, there is the question raised by Dore, Ono and others about whether it is appropriate to talk about internal labour markets at all in the Japanese context, when control is effectively exercised by administrative fiat. We may recall Koike's counter-argument, however, which is that the formal administrative directives which instigate transfers are underpinned by a rigorous system of competition which effectively sets a standard evaluation upon each individual that is similar to a market price (Koike, 1988, p. 222). At the other extreme, it is difficult to fit the reality of Japanese business practice into a simple duality of internal versus external, in a complex world of *keiretsu* affiliations, subordination between semi-autonomous organizations, and even ad hoc linkages designed specifically to redistribute labour between otherwise unrelated firms. Nagano (1989) argues that such linkages define "intermediate organizations" which straddle the conventional boundary between internal and external labour markets, undermining the neat simplicity of that dualism. These relationships spin invisible webs across the economic landscape, stimulating flows of migrants which conform not to conventional frameworks based upon income differences or settlement hierarchies, but to organizational logics which may be largely informal and entirely hidden from view.

9.2.4 Geographical regularities

In the case of the manufacturing sector and other areas of economic activity characterized by discontinuous spatial distributions and by transfer types which arise on an irregular or spontaneous basis, the geographical configuration of interregional transfers is liable to be specific to each organization and to the circumstances under which those transfers arise. A classic example of this was presented in Chapter 6, in which the merger of Fuji Steel and Yawata Steel in 1970 increased the number of available destinations for transfers from Kamaishi, but also boosted the number of sites that were in competition with Kamaishi for the supply of alternative jobs elsewhere, resulting in a shift in the primary destination of permanent transfers of blue-collar workers from Nagoya to Kimitsu.

Most personnel transfers in Japan are not of this type, however, but arise instead as the consequence of job rotations within formal bureaucratic organizations which often share a common administrative structure, and it is from such transfers that marked geographical regularities in migration patterns tend to arise. These regularities appear highly intricate when viewed in detail, but in aggregate their effect is, as we have already noted, quite simple: they produce large exchanges of population between regions which, when added together without reference to the age, seniority or other characteristics of the personnel concerned, effectively cancel each other out.

In all of the geographical regularities detected in transfer activity in Japan, whether at the aggregate level or in the case study presented in Chapter 5, the strongest links have been with settlement size. It is clear from the data examined in Chapter 4 that the largest flows of transferee migrants, measured against all forms of migration or as a component of employment-related migration alone, take place among the three metropolitan regions centred on Tōkyō, Ōsaka and Nagoya, and between those regions and major provincial centres such as Sapporo, Sendai, Hiroshima and Fukuoka. Over half of all migration between these major concentrations of population - and over three quarters of employment-related migration - can be attributed to personnel transfers. The percentages then fall away with decreasing settlement size, to the extent that transfers account for barely one eighth of all migration, and for less than one third of employment-related migration between metropolitan regions and ordinary local towns and villages.

But there is a peculiarity: although the largest flows are between the three metropolitan regions, the smallest flows are not among ordinary towns and villages, but between settlements at the extremes of the size spectrum. It has been shown that this pattern is consistent with the nesting of internal labour markets on a regional basis, itself a consequence of segmentation between different parts of the labour market within individual organizations. For example, the case study of the Ministry of Labour revealed that transfers of senior bureaucrats between the highest and lowest levels of the Ministry's organization (i.e. between the Tōkyō headquarters and local PESOs) are very unusual. The typical Japanese manager may find himself at risk of geographical transfers at key points in his career, but the destinations of those transfers more likely to be large places as time goes on. As a result, the effect of distance upon transfer activity cannot be described in conventional terms, as friction operating across a continuous space, but must instead be seen in terms of discontinuities, of boundaries between particular and localized internal labour market areas, within which interaction may be intense, but across which movements are likely to be rare unless there are intervening moves at higher levels in the appropriate organizational hierarchies.

One consequence of this nesting is that migration in and out of a particular community will reflect internal labour market activity taking place simultaneously at different spatial scales: local, prefectural, regional, national, and in the case of major centres such as Tôkyô, on a global basis. To establish the importance of transfers as a mechanism for migration in the context of a specific settlement, therefore, we must first establish which transfer systems are actually operating there, and ensure that the scale at which migration is defined is appropriate to those systems. This is a problem that has not otherwise been addressed in the literature, as far as the present author is aware. While smaller settlements may be effectively detached from broader interregional transfer systems, transfers organized at a more local scale may be more than adequate to compensate. It was shown in Chapter 4, for example, that while two-thirds of transfers in and out of the largest settlements in a particular prefecture are interprefectural in nature, linking major local cities with centres of population, commerce and administration elsewhere in Japan, nearly two-thirds of transfers in and out of the smallest settlements are of a far more local variety. As a result, while transfers may be an unimportant component of flows between metropolitan regions and distant towns and villages, they may still be the dominant migration form at the local level.

A further paradox is that while the largest absolute flows of transferee migrants take place between Japan's metropolitan regions, transfers actually account for a much higher proportion of employment-related migration in and out of the most rural prefectures. A preponderance of transfers may simply imply, however, that there is otherwise little reason why people would choose to live in such places, that they are unable to attract migrants for any reason other than that they have been sent there.

At a more detailed level, the clearest manifestation of the importance of settlement size to the geography of transfer activity is the so-called "ratchet effect" detected in Chapter 5, in which a transfer that brings no other sign of elevation always take the employee concerned to a larger place, or more precisely to a place that is superior within that organization's own hierarchical construction of space, until such time as promotion is achieved, the ratchet slips, and a transfer to a smaller place becomes a possibility again. Indeed, the process of mobility can be interpreted as a trade-off between the vertical separation of administrative ranks and the geographical importance of places. The broader concept of "structural interlacing of posts" suggests that the distinction between geographical mobility within internal labour markets and vertical mobility through the organizational hierarchy is entirely artificial, since these two are intimately and inseparably linked. In Chapter 5 we found strong evidence in support of this contention at both the intraprefectural and interprefectural scales.

The geographical configuration of particular sequences of moves can be described in terms of "stellar" (or reciprocal) versus "circuit" (or spiral) forms. When branch posts are abundant and headquarters posts scarce, movement will tend to follow circuits linking branch offices together, though always from lower levels in the settlement hierarchy to larger places. Again, Chapter 5 contained examples of this effect in operation at both the intraprefectural and interprefectural scales. When there are few branches, or at levels of seniority where the headquarters staff dominate, movement between posts (and the migration associated with it) is more likely to conform to the alternative, "stellar" pattern. The balance between the stellar and circuit forms of mobility will depend in part, therefore, upon the characteristics of particular organizations and the distribution of settlements (by size) in particular administrative areas. It will also be affected, however, by labour market segmentation, which can lead to elite officials pre-empting the most senior headquarters posts at a particular level in an organization, as well as by policies on mobility, training and career development.

9.2.5 Housing the transferee

A distinctive characteristic of personnel transfers in Japan explored in Chapter 7 is the extent to which the accommodation needs of transferees are satisfied directly by the employer, through the leasing of appropriate properties or the use of "issued" or company housing. Around one half of all transferee households move into "issued housing", ten times the proportion one might expect given the composition of the Japanese housing stock. This result appears even more remarkable in light of the fact that over time, the proportion of Japan's housing stock located within the company owned sector has dropped substantially. There has been a shift in corporate priorities away from catering *en masse* to provision for specific groups, amongst whom transferees have been singled out for special attention. Moreover, the company housing stock is concentrated amongst the largest employers, those which are more likely to operate on a multi-regional basis and thereby more likely to stimulate interregional migration.

The reasons why Japanese employers have chosen to involve themselves in such a direct manner in housing provision are complex, and have changed markedly over time, in response to evolving conditions in the housing and labour markets. The most important issues today, for example, include the effects of land price inflation in the national capital region upon the ability of employees to make alternative housing provision. By insulating their employees from many of the uncertainties and hardships associated with the acquisition, maintenance and disposal of residential property, particularly where there are large differentials in housing costs between different parts of the country, large Japanese organizations are able to move people around with far less resistance on grounds of personal hardship than would otherwise be the case. In effect, many Japanese employers operate "internal housing markets" alongside their equivalent

labour markets, a phenomenon that appears to be uncommon in other developed countries, but which is of considerable conceptual significance as a link between labour mobility and residential migration.

Regional differences in housing costs present difficulties for the interregional migrant which are unique neither to transferees nor to Japan. The problems facing the transferee are particularly serious, however, not only because moves are frequent, but also because their direction and timing are geared to the requirements of the employer rather than to an optimal strategy for investment in the housing market. In the Japanese case, the need to ensure that moves take place in "simultaneous chains", so that disturbance within the workplace is minimized, also implies that a premium is placed upon the avoidance of delays in the provision of accommodation, which would be impossible if homes were to be bought and sold on each occasion when jobs are rotated. These considerations encourage direct employer involvement in the housing market, particularly in the case of personnel who are subject to frequent transfers. Employers also facilitate residential mobility in other ways, which were documented in Chapter 7, including the payment of rent subsidies and disturbance allowances.

9.2.6 The partial migration solution

A final and very distinctive feature of the Japanese case is the frequency with which transferees who have been ordered to move to new job locations opt to leave their families behind for the duration of the posting, and thus become temporary "business bachelors". This practice, known as *tanshin funin* in Japanese, has been described as "partial migration" in this thesis, for the reason that the full underlying potential for household migration is not actually realized. Although there are reports of similar phenomena in other countries, if under rather different circumstances, the evidence presented in Chapter 8 suggests a level of household disruption unprecedented in any other developed nation. Most sources suggest that between one fifth and one third of all married transferees opt to live apart from their families, and there is also a widespread perception that the incidence of *tanshin funin* is on the increase, although there is no statistical evidence to bear this out over the long term. Partial migration is commonplace and, for a variety of complex reasons, it is also comparatively acceptable.

The implication of partial migration by definition is that far less interregional population movement is generated than would otherwise be the case given the number of exchanges taking place within internal labour markets. This is particularly true for older transferees, who are more likely to opt for the partial migration solution. Nevertheless, we should not lose sight of the fact that interregional transfers of personnel are far more likely to result in the migration of family groups than is true of any other cause. In

Chapter 3, for example, we found that more than four-fifths of households containing four or more members migrating together to or from Tôkyô moved because of transfers. In conceptual terms, however, the importance of partial migration is that it focuses our attention upon the mechanisms through which labour mobility is translated into residential migration, an inevitable combination when commuting or the partial migration solution are not available, but a far more complex process when all options are open.

Most surveys agree that the primary reason why transferees in Japan opt for partial migration is their desire to avoid disrupting the education of their children, particularly as the latter become older, which is why the incidence of partial migration rises markedly as the age of transferees increases. There are other reasons, however, including problems associated with home ownership, a finding which demonstrates that extensive employer intervention in the housing market is not a perfect lubricant for interregional migration. A particular problem that many households face is that of managing their permanent residence during a period of absence, a problem that does not disappear even if company housing is made available at the destination of the transfer. Other causes of partial migration include difficulties associated with the care and mobility of elderly parents, and requirements linked to the spouse's employment. Such considerations emerged in graphic form in the case study of Kamaishi in Chapter 6, where the increasing average age of the workforce in the 1970s and 1980s had a marked effect, not just because older workers were more likely to have children of school age whose education would have suffered through the move, but also because older workers were far more likely to be home owners. The broader lesson to be learned here is that attention must also be paid to the ability of workers to accept transfers when offered - to their inherent mobility.

The geographical characteristics of partial migration remain obscure, beyond some limited evidence that partial migration results in a greater concentration of families in larger settlements that might otherwise be the case. The periodicities of return journeys are certainly influenced by geographical distance: the evidence suggests a strong inverse relationship between the distance of the transfer and the frequency of return trips home. This suggests the possibility at least that the incidence of partial migration possesses a distinctive geography of its own, in which partial migration is a more attractive proposition for short distance transferees, whereas those required to move greater distances may be more inclined to take their families with them. This is a matter of conjecture, however, rather than of fact.

It is also the case that there is an inherent contradiction in the response of many organizations to partial migration. Major employers have developed specific policies to cope with *tanshin funin* and its effects, but in developing these policies, they have been forced to come to terms with the fact that the greater the assistance offered to persons

who choose to migrate alone, so the more attractive that option becomes. A delicate balance must be struck, therefore, between assisting those who have little choice but to undertake partial migration on the one hand, and increasing the attractiveness of alternatives such as full residential mobility on the other. The evidence suggests that most partial migrants do face higher costs as a result of their decision to live apart, particularly with respect to accommodation charges. Employer intervention in the housing market, therefore, has not been a major stimulus to any increase (real or perceived) in the incidence of partial migration.

9.3 An agenda for future research

Despite the conclusions reached in this thesis - both the general conclusions reported in the previous section and the many detailed observations made in the individual chapters - a great deal remains to be discovered about personnel transfers in Japan, their relationship to interregional migration, and many related issues to which reference has been made in passing, and which must now be addressed in detail. In this section we set out an agenda for future research in this area, an agenda that is subdivided into six discrete but closely interrelated categories: decisions on transfers, extensions of the case studies, data handling, types of transfers, transfers in time and space, and the broader impact of personnel transfers.

9.3.1 Decisions on transfers

The most obvious weakness underlying much of the empirical research reported in earlier chapters is that it is inductive, and therefore does not directly address the real mechanisms that generate transfers: the decisions of individual personnel managers, and the rules and codes of practice under which they operate. This weakness has been excused thus far on three grounds: first, lack of access to the appropriate decision makers; second, the ready availability of alternative sources of information on the consequences of personnel decisions; and third, the importance of structural constraints (or limitations upon freedom of action amongst decision makers) operative at the level of aggregation at which our questions have been asked. The means of removing the first of these obstacles is clear: it is time to address questions about how and why particular decisions have been made to personnel managers directly, through survey research conducted within selected Japanese organizations. This research may actually be assisted by the availability of alternative data and the inferences we may derive from them, since the latter will allow appropriate issues to be identified and suitable questions to be formulated. For example, the case study of the Ministry of Labour presented in Chapter 5 left open a number of questions which might now be pursued on a direct basis, such as why it is that particular "chains" of simultaneous moves are put together from amongst a range of possibilities, whether or

not the headquarters operations at the prefectural level do indeed perform a "switching point" role, and other aspects of formal policy and informal practice both at the national level and within individual prefectures. A survey conducted amongst the latter would be of particular interest, given the extent of interprefectural variations in the distribution of posts between headquarters and branches and between settlements of different sizes. This research should be complemented by the collection of formal policy documents on staff deployment and career development, contracts of employment, accords with the appropriate unions, and any other materials that may shed some light upon the administration of personnel transfers and the rules under which this administration is conducted.

It is important to bear in mind, however, that the decision to migrate is separate from the decision to switch jobs. Personnel managers are best placed to explain the latter, and may even be the sole decision makers, and assistance made available to transferees to cover moving costs and housing provision may be influential in any consequent migration decisions, but the act of residential migration cannot be fully understood without reference to the transferees themselves. There is scope, therefore, for more detailed research into how individual personnel take migration decisions and, in particular, on the extent to which migration decisions are conditional upon the transferee's perception of future mobility prospects.

We should also note, however, that the question of aggregation, and the scale at which issues may be defined, presents a real problem for the student of interregional migration, in so much as many of the phenomena of interest to the geographer in particular may occur entirely as incidental side effects of policy decisions, effects that are of no relevance to the decision makers responsible and, as in the case of generalizations derived from comparisons between prefectures in Chapter 5, may even be completely unknown to everyone directly involved. The approaches deployed in this thesis do not represent an inherently inferior alternative to direct survey research, therefore, but rather constitute an appropriate and necessary complement to it.

9.3.2 Extending the case studies

A second limitation of the case study materials presented in Chapters 5 and 6 is the absence of any proper indication of how representative these examples may be of other organizations in Japan. An informal comparison with Yamaguchi's work suggested a number of broad similarities between personnel transfer practices in the Ministries of Labour and Construction, but this comparison should be expanded to incorporate other organs of central and local government, as well as private sector institutions that share a common bureaucratic form, such as banks and insurance companies. The means to

undertake this work lie readily to hand, in directories of government ministries (at least one of which, the *Shokuinroku*, is now published annually in CD-ROM format), in directories of personnel in private companies, such as those published by Diamond-sha for public consumption and on occasion by the companies themselves for internal use, and in regular journal and newspaper reports on the latest staff postings within large organizations. Examples of the latter source include the lists of personnel changes within the main steel companies of Japan printed in the industry's own broadsheets, *Tekkô Shimbun* and *Kinzoku Tokuhô*, which could provide unique insights into transfer activities amongst managerial staff in the manufacturing sector, and which would in turn complement the case study of production workers in the same industry presented in Chapter 6.

Questions were also raised in Chapter 6 about how representative the Nippon Steel Corporation is of the Japanese steel industry in general, and to what extent the experience of Kamaishi as far as personnel transfers and migration are concerned mirrors that existing in other industrial *jokamachi* facing similar problems, including other foci of steel production (such as Muroran), one-industry shipbuilding towns around the Inland Sea (such as Inoshima), and scattered mining and smelting communities (like Niihama). Again, these are empirical questions to which answers may be sought either in published records or from original field research.

9.3.3 Data handling

A third important limitation of the case study materials, and particularly those presented in Chapter 5, lies in the fairly rudimentary techniques employed to analyse the career histories of individuals. We have confined our attention to cross-sections defined at critical points in the organizational structure, when the chances of interregional transfers taking place are at a maximum, and at a level of aggregation in which most of the information about individual transferees is effectively lost. While this has not precluded the discovery of some important generalizations, it still represents an inadequate use of the materials to hand, since the individuals concerned do not experience transfers solely as unique events, but also as part of unfolding career histories, histories that are further intertwined through simultaneous chains of transfers. In short, more sophisticated means need to be identified for handling the complex latitudinal and longitudinal data sets which may be generated from published reports on personnel transfers. This is a general methodological problem, not confined to the Japanese case, but the Japanese case may yet prove important for the development of appropriate methodologies because of the unparalleled richness of the data sources.

9.3.4 Transfer types

Returning to questions of substance, while some types of personnel transfer have been examined in considerable depth in this thesis, others have received more cursory attention (other than in Chapter 6), in part because very little information is available on their migrational impact. This comment applies in particular to outplacements and temporary "loans".

There is a large Japanese literature on the subject of outplacements, the principal work being that by Nagano (1989), but detailed surveys are also published on a regular basis in journals such as *Rôsei Jihô* and by departments within the Ministry of Labour. One feature that is common to these sources, however, and the reason why so little use has been made of them in this thesis, is their complete lack of attention to the geographical dimension of outplacements. It may be the case that most outplacements, particularly those designed as a means of offloading surplus labour, take place in the immediate vicinity of the factories and offices concerned, and are thus unlikely to promote interregional migration. Perhaps the examples found in the Kamaishi case study are unique to the peculiar circumstances of such an isolated location, in which local employment opportunities for older workers are severely limited. If so, then the absence of relevant survey information is entirely understandable. The point to be made here, however, is that in the absence of anything other than anecdotal information we just don't know how important the geographical dimension really is, a deficiency that can only be resolved through further empirical investigation.

A related issue concerns how decisions either to outplace or to loan workers to particular destinations are arrived at, particularly when considerable distances are involved. How are potential destinations identified, how is relevant information on surpluses and vacancies managed within and across the boundaries of companies and *keiretsu*, who is involved in the decision to transfer, and how are difficulties such as the provision of housing overcome? Again these are empirical questions, but they are underpinned by important conceptual uncertainties regarding the definition of "internal" labour markets in the Japanese context.

Another aspect of outplacement to which only passing reference has been made concerns its knock-on effects. When managerial staff in particular are offloaded onto subsidiaries and affiliates, the latter then face the problem of absorbing these additional workers, either by expanding their business activities or by putting pressure upon their own employees to take jobs elsewhere, through a second round of outplacements or permanent transfers. Again, some evidence of this emerges from the Kamaishi case study

and from other literature on the steel industry, but mostly on an incidental and anecdotal basis.

While some types of personnel transfer have received at least a superficial treatment in this thesis, others have been overlooked almost entirely, due once again to the absence of appropriate data. In particular, there is a stratum of employees between conventional managers and senior blue-collar workers about whom we have said very little: professional, technical and scientific workers, including research staff in large companies and teaching staff in universities and colleges. The mobility patterns of the former are obviously constrained by the location of research facilities, and it may be the case that geographical transfers are far less frequent than amongst managerial personnel, since the training and expertise required are specific and highly technical. Under these circumstances, the opening or closing of facilities may play a far larger role in stimulating migration flows amongst technical staff than does conventional job rotation, a hypothesis which calls for further empirical investigation. One opportunity that presents itself in the context of Chapter 6, for example, is the impact of the opening of Nippon Steel's new research centre at Futtsu City (Chiba Prefecture) on the geographical mobility of its scientists, particularly from a career-long perspective and in comparison with the general managers who have been drafted into the same facility.

As for university teachers (as well as doctors and other professionals), few foreign students of Japan can fail to have observed the power of patronage linkages within Japanese academia, and the knock-on effects of changes in senior ranks at more junior levels and in other colleges and schools from which replacements are drawn. Academic careers are shaped by powerful constraints within the labour market in higher education, constraints based not upon the formal relationship with the employing university but upon the personal relationships between *sensei* and *deshi*, master and disciple, which remain valid for life. For example, Long (1983) has noted the resignations amongst junior university medical staff which usually follow when a senior doctor fails to secure a chair. These relationships, and the geographical mobility which they generate, warrant careful mapping, if only to demonstrate that some forms of internal labour market activity cut right across the conventional boundaries of organizations, regions and areal hierarchies. It may also be the case that an approach based upon patronage networks rather than formal ranks and rules of career development would provide a better explanation of mobility in other contexts as well, such as the Japanese bureaucracy. Again, this is a matter for investigation in the field, although much of the work required is better suited to the skills of the anthropologist than to the geographer.

Finally, one other recent development in the Japanese labour market should be mentioned, namely the emergence of manpower agencies engaged in the provision of

temporary workers for factories and offices on a commercial basis. There is no evidence that the employees of these agencies are required to move home on a frequent basis to follow their work; rather, their impact upon interregional migration is likely to be negative and indirect, the result of loans, outplacements and permanent transfers forestalled by the participation of major employers in what are in effect organized external labour markets created by these agencies. Whether substitution effects of this type have actually had any effect on the volume or other characteristics of interregional migration streams remains to be demonstrated, however.

9.3.5 Transfers in time and space

We now come to a substantial list of research opportunities which have in common some form of linkage to the concept of regularities in time and geographical space.

9.3.5.1 Transfers in time

In Chapter 4 we noted that a complex relationship exists between cyclical fluctuations in the economy and both the volume and character of transfer activity. This relationship should now be explored further, with particular reference to the mix of transfer types deployed at different stages within normal economic cycles. Is it the case, for example, that internal redeployments are easier to arrange than external loans or outplacements, and are thus resorted to first during a recession? Are local opportunities examined first, thereby postponing the peak of migrational responses until well after the recession has bottomed out? And to what extent does the timing of any resort to personnel transfers differ between segments of the labour market: are blue-collar workers likely to have to move at an earlier stage than white-collar workers, and what relationship (if any) does transfer activity in the public sector bear to cyclical trends in the broader economy?

In addition, these questions about cyclical behaviour cannot be divorced from longer term trends in the Japanese economy, which alter the very basis upon which personnel management decisions are made, as well as the nature of the transferee's response. For example, the measures recently adopted by leading automobile manufacturers in Japan to redeploy workers from manufacturing to sales during a period of recession (a form of *shanai ôen*) must be understood in the context of longer term and acute shortages of labour in the industry, particularly in the Tôkyô and Nagoya areas, which has recently prompted a wholesale migration of manufacturing capacity to Western Japan. While the emphasis in the short term may be on the expansion of sales to match production capacity, the manufacturers appreciate the need to secure their access to labour supplies in the long term, and temporary redeployment as an alternative to redundancy is one means to this end. This in turn raises the question of how far the behaviour of employers in the

current recession in Japan differs from that characteristic of earlier downturns, and of the extent to which any differences can be attributed to secular rather than cyclical factors.

Over the longer term, the future of personnel transfers and the interregional migration they cause depends upon the shifting arguments for and against the maintenance of internal labour markets and the "lifetime employment system". To some extent these arguments also display a cyclical pattern, with employers keenest to break the rules when confronted by recession, and employees happiest to jump ship when labour shortages are at their most acute. But there are also deeper secular changes taking place in the Japanese economy, such as the growing importance of professional skills, the increasing role women and the general ageing of the labour force which may well have an impact upon how personnel transfers are managed. Japan's internal labour markets are continually evolving: the emergence of some many new enterprises in the steel industry over the past decade staffed by former steelworkers and their managers is a case in point. Any attempt to predict future levels of interregional transfer activity will have to take structural transformations like this into account.

The impact of long term changes in transport facilities upon the migration behaviour of transferees is another important area requiring additional research. Even if the "lifetime employment system" retains its current strength in Japan, there is no reason to believe that continued improvements in the transport infrastructure, which reduce the effective travel time between places as well as the cost of movement, will not shift the balance between commuting, partial residential migration and full migration - as they appear to have done already, and changes in this balance may be further compounded by rising incomes and changes in the pattern of home ownership and the provision of overnight or temporary accommodation. In aggregate terms it seems likely that long distance commuting will increasingly be substituted for full or partial migration, but at what pace this change is taking place now or will take place in the future, and to what extent this is to be at the expense of partial rather than full residential migration, remains to be determined through detailed empirical research.

9.3.5.2 Transfers in space

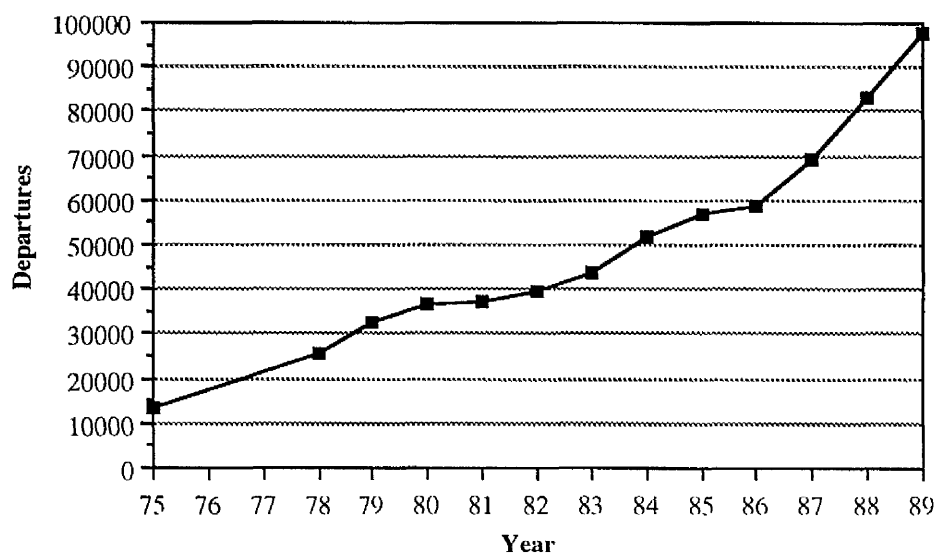
At least three issues deserve additional attention in relation to the geographical scale at which transfers take place. The first was raised in Chapter 8: the relationship (if any) between settlement size, distance and the incidence of partial migration. This represents a logical extension of the work already commenced in Chapter 8, and little further elaboration of the issue is required here. The second, which was addressed in the same chapter, is the spread of the "regional employment system". This may eventually have an important bearing on the substitution of commuting for transfers, although not as yet,

given the low level of diffusion of the system amongst Japanese employers. There is certainly scope for further research, however, aimed at identifying the extent to which migration patterns have indeed been modified in those organizations which have implemented some variant of the system.

The third issue, however, the international mobility of Japanese personnel, has been all but ignored in this thesis, yet it may ultimately prove of greater significance at both a conceptual and a practical level than any other aspect of Japanese transfer systems.

In a survey of the current state of research on labour migration, Johnson and Salt (1990, p. 12) noted that "... the nature and significance of the links between internal and international labour migration need elaboration, both at theoretical and practical levels, in the light of the growing economic integration among states at the global level". Major Japan companies have played a leading role in this process of integration, a task that has been facilitated by large scale international transfers of personnel, currently running at a level of around 100,000 departures from Japan each year (Figure 9.1).

Figure 9.1 Japanese citizens leaving Japan "on assignment to overseas branches", 1975-89*



*Note: Excluding dependents, private sector only.

Source: Japan Statistical Yearbook, 1983, 1986 and 1990 editions.

When a Japanese company opens a new branch overseas, any managerial posts reserved for Japanese nationals become additional rungs on the promotion ladder, and necessitate some form of integration between domestic and international personnel management practices and transfer systems. In some respects the problems to be faced are no different from those which arise in managing a domestic branch, but others are

specific to international operations, such as legal constraints on eligibility for employment and differences in language, customs and methods of work.

The main challenges facing research on the international dimension of Japanese personnel transfer systems are therefore first, to determine the manner in which international movements are integrated with career development paths and other well-established aspects of transfers within Japan; second, to identify the extent to which standard practices need to be modified to cope with the additional challenges posed by international operations; and third, to establish whether or not some of the geographical regularities observed in transfer patterns within Japan are also mirrored at the global level. Is it possible, for example, that the "ratchet effect" identified in Chapter 5 also operates at a higher spatial scale, restricting flows of Japanese personnel to a one-way stream from small countries to large ones? Again, some of the materials required to undertake research on this topic are already available from published sources, such as the personnel directories published by Diamond-sha, but much would have to depend upon surveys of management policies and decision making at the headquarters level in Japan itself, as well as in overseas branches.

9.3.6 The impact of personnel transfers

Finally, additional research is required to address the impact of personnel transfers, and the migration to which they give rise, upon the organizations within which they take place and in the broader context of Japanese economy and society. Some research opportunities, while of undoubted value, clearly bear little relationship to the sorts of questions addressed in this thesis, and would require the expertise of anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists to be elaborated properly. For example, the data set developed for Chapter 5 may be of considerable use in locating the foci of power and influence within the Ministry of Labour, a matter of some interest to the student of Japanese political processes, but the means to achieve this goal would best be elaborated by an expert in that field. There are however at least three aspects of the impact of transfer systems which do have obvious geographical implications.

First, the migration of large numbers of people within Japan and between Japan and the outside world each year in response to personnel transfers is underpinned by an important economic infrastructure: the railways, airlines, removals companies, hoteliers, purveyors of related business and personal services (particularly for "business bachelors"), bankers, estate agents and so forth. How much of this economic activity actually depends upon transfers is unknown, but an attempt to estimate its worth is certainly worth making, along with some insights into its geographical distribution.

Second, what is the broader regional economic impact of personnel transfers, in addition to the value of goods and services generated? To what extent, for example, does this form of migration cause a direct leakage of wealth out of peripheral regional economies through the transfer of salaries earned to families left behind in the national capital, or inflict indirect damage by frustrating the career aspirations of local employees and reducing the employment-generating effects of new investments? There is an important linkage here between regional development theory and migration theory that deserves to be elaborated more fully, particularly given the recent expansion of Japanese transfer systems into the international arena.

And third, building upon the discussion in Chapter 7, it is clear that a great deal more research is warranted into the implications of transfer systems for housing markets. Questions need to be asked about how exactly company housing is allocated to transferees, how companies go about securing leased accommodation and the criteria employed in selecting properties, and the role of company housing sites as property assets in corporate balance sheets. There are even certain regional development implications to the company housing sector: for example, several of the new enterprises which have been attracted to Kamaishi and other declining steel towns over the past few years have been located on sites formerly occupied by redundant company housing (Wiltshire, 1991), and the accommodation needs of the key workers who have accompanied these new inward investments have also been met by recycling company housing.

Another aspect of company housing provision that deserves close attention, but which has not been commented upon in the urban geography literature, is its contribution to the structure and fabric of Japanese cities. Informal fieldwork conducted by the author in Kamaishi, Sendai and other localities in 1990 suggested a strong relationship between the rank of the members of staff living in a particular building, the quality of the structure and the status of the neighbourhood: in effect, the hierarchical status of individuals as defined by a particular employer can be used as an independent definition of the ecological structure of the Japanese city. To take a specific example, the manager of the Sendai branch of one of Japan's leading city banks, who is rotated in from Tōkyō every two or three years, lives in a leased apartment in a private high-rise block commanding the best view of the city's most famous tourist attraction: the ruined castle of Aoba-jo. His deputy lives in company-owned housing, but of the detached variety, further from the castle but close to another scenic spot: the tomb of the warlord who had the castle built, Date Masamune. At the other extreme, some of the bank's more junior clerks are accommodated in a slightly run-down and nondescript apartment block far away in an industrial suburb of the city. Similar (if rather more subtle) differentiation was found to exist amongst company-owned apartments in Kamaishi, where the accommodation set

aside for senior managers is readily distinguishable from the smaller and (externally at least) less carefully maintained apartments occupied by junior office staff and manual workers. This is little more more than anecdotal evidence, but it does suggest that a new dimension in the study of Japanese urban geography is waiting to be developed.

And finally, these observations on the role of company housing within Japanese cities lead us outside Japan entirely, to Hendon, Golders Green and Surbiton, and to questions about how the accommodation needs of international transferees are met, and the impact of the overseas business community upon the communities and local economies into which it is transplanted. To what extent, for example, do Japanese companies attempt to make their own housing provision for employees in other countries, on what basis is this done, are standard Japanese practices modified to suit local conditions, and how is this activity regarded by other actors in the housing market? Unlike most of the questions which have been elaborated in this agenda, these do not require additional research in Japan itself: many of the answers are to be found almost literally on our own doorstep.

Glossary of Japanese Terms

<i>amakudari</i> 天下り	assumption of post-retirement employment, especially by former bureaucrats (lit: "descent from heaven")
<i>bekkyo teate</i> 別居手当	separation allowance
<i>chakkô teate</i> 着後手当	arrival allowance
<i>dôitsu kigyônai idô</i> 同一企業内異動	transfers within the same company
<i>gentei kinmu chisei</i> 限定勤務地制	regional employee system
<i>gijutsushoku shain</i> 技術職社員	blue-collar employee (especially of Nippon Steel Corporation)
<i>haichi tenkan</i> 配置転換	permanent transfer, personnel transposition
<i>ichiji kisei kyûka</i> 一時帰省休暇	special leave for family reunions
<i>ichiji kisei kôtsûhi</i> 一時帰省交通費	assistance with the cost of return travel
<i>iseki</i> 移籍	transfer of employment contract to another company
<i>jijochô</i> 次所長	deputy branch manager
<i>jinji idô</i> 人事異動	staff reshuffle
<i>jochô</i> 所長	branch manager
<i>kachô</i> 課長	section chief
<i>kachô hosa</i> 課長補佐	deputy section chief
<i>kakarichô</i> 係長	sub-section chief, chief clerk
<i>kansatsukan</i> 監察官	inspector, supervisor, professional officer
<i>katamichi shukkô</i> 片道出向	permanent outplacement (lit: "outplaced with a one-way ticket")
<i>keiretsu</i> 経列	informal business grouping
<i>kigyô jôkamachi</i> 企業城下町	company town
<i>kyûyo jûtaku</i> 給与住宅	issued housing
<i>madogiwa</i> 窓際	redundant but not laid off (lit: "sitting by the window")
<i>shagai haken</i> 社外派遣	inter-company loan of personnel
<i>shanai haken</i> 社内派遣	inter-branch loan of personnel
<i>shataku</i> 社宅	company housing
<i>shinkansen</i> 新幹線	bullet train
<i>shitakuryô</i> 支度料	disturbance allowance
<i>shokan ôen</i> 所間応援	inter-branch loan of personnel
<i>shukan</i> 主幹	chief manager
<i>shukkô</i> 出向	outplacement
<i>shumushoku shain</i> 主務職社員	white-collar employee (especially of Nippon Steel Corporation)
<i>shûshin koyô</i> 終身雇用	lifetime employment

<i>tanshin funin</i> 单身赴任	partial migration; living apart from the family on the assumption of a new post
<i>tanshin funinsha</i> 单身赴任者専用寮 <i>senyôryô</i>	dormitory set aside for use by partial migrants
<i>tasha ôen</i> 他社応援	inter-company loan of personnel
<i>tenkin</i> 転勤	job rotation; personnel transfer
<i>tenseki</i> 転籍	transfer of employment contract to another company (lit: "transfer of domicile")
<i>tentakuryô</i> 転宅料	allowance for removal expenses
<i>yachin hojo</i> 家賃補助	rent subsidy
<i>zaiseki jinin</i> 在籍人員	registered company employee (especially of Nippon Steel Corporation)

Appendix A Some surveys which include information on migration and personnel transfers in Japan

Housing Research and Advancement Foundation of Japan

Name of Survey:

Kigyônai Jûtaku Taisaku ni kansuru Jittai Chôsa (Survey of Housing Policy Within Enterprises)

Survey Report:

Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentâ, Kigyônai Jûtaku Taisaku ni kansuru Jittai Chôsa (Survey of Housing Policy Within Enterprises). Housing Research and Advancement Foundation of Japan, Survey Research Report No. 87163 (Tôkyô: Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentâ), 1989

Authority Responsible:

Nihon Jûtaku Sôgô Sentâ (Housing Research and Advancement Foundation of Japan).

Target Population:

4,746 companies listed in the upper and lower sections of the Tôkyô Stock Exchange, including all companies listed in the upper section.

Target Period:

January 11 - February 29, 1988.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire.

Sample Size:

793 companies.

Definition of Transfers:

The word *tenkin* is used in set reasons for giving priority in housing allocation, etc., but without a formal definition.

Definition of Regions:

None.

Definition of Company Housing:

Two types: Company-owned company housing (*jisha hoyû shataku*) and Leased company housing (*kariage shataku*)

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 7 and 8.

Industrial Labour Survey Institute

Names of Surveys:

(a) Kokunai Tenkin-Funin Ryohi ni kansuru Chôsa (Survey of Domestic Transfers and Travel to New Posts).

(b) Tenkinsha e no Fukushi Shisaku ni kansuru Chôsa (Survey of Welfare Policies for Transferees)

Survey Report:

Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo, Shutchô - Funin - Taizai Benran '90 Nenpen (Handbook of Business Trips, Postings and Residence, 1990 Edition). (Tôkyô: Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo), 1990

Authority Responsible:

Sangyô Rôdô Chôsajo (Industrial Labour Survey Institute).

Target Populations:

(a) A sample of 2,200 private companies listed on the Tôkyô Stock Exchange.

(b) 1,243 private companies with 1,000 or more employees, plus 333 companies in Tôkyô with 500-999 employees, plus 190 companies which responded to the previous survey in 1986.

Target Period:

(b) September 16 - October 5, 1989.

(b) Early July to early August, 1989.

Data Collection Method:

Postal Questionnaire.

Sample Size:

(a) 353 companies replied, of whom 310 implemented transfers.

(b) 105 companies answered all questions, but 110 provided information regarding company housing.

Definition of Transfers:

Tenkin is defined as a change in the location of employment within the same company.

Definition of Regions:

None.

Definition of Company Housing:

Company housing (*shataku*), which is either company-owned (*shayû*) or company-leased (*kariage*)

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 7 and 8.

Kôbe City

Name of Survey:

Jinkô Idô Jittai Chôsa (Survey of Population Migration).

Survey Reports:

1. Kôbe-shi, Kôbe-shi no Jinkô Idô: Shôwa 52-nen Jinkô Idô Jittai Chôsa Kekka (Population Migration in the City of Kobe: Result of the 1977 Survey of Population Migration). (Kôbe: Kôbe-shi Kikakukyoku Tôkeika), 1979.

2. Kôbe-shi, Kôbe-shi no Jinkô Idô: Shôwa 62-nen Jinkô Idô Jittai Chôsa Kekka (Population Migration in the City of Kobe: Result of the 1987 Survey of Population Migration). (Kôbe: Kôbe-shi Kikakukyoku Tôkeika), 1988.

Authority Responsible:

Kôbe-shi Kikakukyoku Tôkeika (Statistics Section, Planning Bureau, City of Kôbe).

Target Population:

Individuals who registered a change of residence with the City of Kôbe under the provisions of the Residents Registration Law.

Target Period:

1. January - December 1977.

2. January - December 1986.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire sent to one sixth of all persons who changed residence during the target period.

Sample Size:

1. For movement in and out of the city, the target sample size was 17,244, and the actual sample size was 6,372, with a response rate of 44% (excluding persons who could not be traced).

2. For movement in and out of the city, the target sample size was 11,770, and the actual sample size was 4,624, with a response rate of 44% (excluding persons who could not be traced).

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Selection of the (one) main reason for changing residence from a pre-determined list.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) is one of the items on a pre-determined list.

Definition of Regions:

Kinki consists of six prefectures (Shiga, Kyôto, Ôsaka, Nara, Hyôgo and Wakayama).

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 4.

Labour Administration Research Institute

Name of Survey:

Kokunai Tenkin ni kansuru Kakushû Toriatsukai Jittai Chôsa (Survey of the Actual Treatment of Transferees Within Japan).

Survey Report:

Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, Tenkin ni kansuru Teate oyobi Shôtoriatsukai Jittai Chôsa Kekka no Gaiyô (Treatment of and Allowances Available to Transferees: A Summary of Survey Results). (Tôkyô: Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo), October 1986

Authority Responsible:

Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo (Labour Administration Research Institute).

Target Population:

Around 1,850 companies listed in the upper section of the Tôkyô Stock Exchange, and around 700 companies listed in the lower section of the Tôkyô Stock Exchange with 500 or more employees.

Target Period:

June 11 - August 11, 1986.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire.

Sample Size:

314 companies.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) involving a change of residence.

Definition of Regions:

None.

Definition of Company Housing:

Two types: Company-owned company housing (*shayû shataku*) and Leased company housing (*kariage shataku*).

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 7 and 8.

Labour Administration Research Institute

Name of Survey:

Tenkin ni kansuru Kakushû Toriatsukai Jittai Chôsa (Survey of the Actual Treatment of Transferees).

Survey Report:

Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, "Tenkin - tanshin funin o meguru toriatsukai to teate no Jittai: 63-nen (Treatment of and allowances available to transferees and to workers living apart from their families: 1988)". *Rôsei Jihô*, No. 2899, 1988, pp. 2-37.

Authority Responsible:

Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo (Labour Administration Research Institute).

Target Population:

Around 1,900 companies listed in the upper section of the Tôkyô Stock Exchange, and around 2,600 companies listed in the lower section of the Tôkyô Stock Exchange with 500 or more employees.

Target Period:

For the survey used in this Chapter, the target period was June 1988 - August 1988. The survey has been conducted on an irregular basis in the following years: 1972, 1973, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1984 and 1986.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire.

Sample Size:

248 companies (1988).

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Companies were asked if they implemented *tenkin*, and individuals whether they had experienced *tenkin*, with the clear implication that the word meant job rotation with an associated change of residence.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) involving a change of residence.

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 3 and 8.

Labour Administration Research Institute

Name of Survey:

Jinji Rômu Kanri Shôseidô Chôsa (Survey of Various Personnel Management Systems).

Survey Report:

Materials extracted from this survey's report have been obtained from: Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo, "Gentei kinmu chisei no saishin jirei to dônnyû kigyô no sono ato (Recent examples of areally restricted transfer systems and their impacts upon the enterprises concerned)". *Rôsei Jihô*, No. 2948, 1989, pp. 2-10.

Authority Responsible:

Rômu Gyôsei Kenkyûjo (Labour Administration Research Institute).

Target Population:

Companies listed in the upper section of the Tôkyô Stock Exchange.

Target Period:

1988.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire.

Sample Size:

Around 360 companies.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Unclear.

Definition of Transfers:

Unclear.

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 8.

Labour Ministry

Name of Survey:

Chûkô Nensai Rôdôsha no Shokugyô Seikatsu ni taisuru Ishiki ni kansuru Chôsa Kenkyû (Research Survey on the Working Life and Attitudes of Middle-Aged and Older Workers).

Survey Report:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, Chûkô Howaito Karâ no Kinrô Ishiki (Attitudes Towards Work Amongst Older White-Collar Workers). (Tôkyô: Okurashô Insatsukyoku), 1985.

Authority Responsible:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô Seisaku Chôsabû (Policy and Research Division, Ministry of Labour). The actual survey was conducted by the Koyô Mondai Kenkyûkai.

Target Population:

Companies with 100 or more employees located in 11 major cities, plus male white-collar employees in the same companies.

Target Period:

December 1984 - March 1985.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire.

Sample Size:

For companies the target sample size was 1,524 and the actual sample size was 649, with a response rate of 42.6%. For individuals the target sample size was 10,000 and the actual sample size was 4,102, with a response rate of 41.0%.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Companies were asked if they implemented *tenkin*, and individuals whether they had experienced *tenkin*, with the clear implication that the word meant job rotation with an associated change of residence.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) involving a change of residence.

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 3, 4 and 8.

Labour Ministry

Name of Survey:

Chingin Rôdô Jikan Seidô nado Sôgô Chôsa (Comprehensive Survey of Wages, Working Hours and Other Matters).

Survey Report:

Materials extracted from this survey's report have been obtained from: Rôsei Jihô, "Fukuri kôsei, teinen taishoku junbi, tanshin funin no genkyô (On the present status of welfare provisions, preparations for retirement, and living part from the family)". Rôsei Jihô, No. 2855, 1987, pp. 44-55.

Authority Responsible:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô Seisaku Chôsabû (Policy and Research Division, Ministry of Labour).

Target Population:

Companies with 30 or more employees.

Target Period:

The year to December 31, 1986, or FY 1985.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire.

Sample Size:

Around 6000.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Companies were asked to state the number of employees currently on partial migration.

Definition of Transfers:

Persons who moved residence at the time of a new posting.

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 8.

Labour Ministry

Name of Survey:

Koyô Dôkô Chôsa (Survey of Employment Trends).

Survey Reports:

The main report used for this thesis is: Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, Shôwa 63-nen Koyô Dôkô Chôsa Hôkoku (Report of the 1988 Survey of Employment Trends). (Tôkyô: Okurashô Insatsukyoku), 1990.

Authority Responsible:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô Seisaku Chôsabu (Policy and Research Division, Ministry of Labour).

Target Populations:

Private companies with five or more employees in nine major industrial sectors, and all persons entering or leaving employment with such companies.

Target Period:

Twice every year to cover the periods January - June and July - December.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire.

Sample Size:

The target is 100%.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

In the surveys of individuals entering and leaving employment, questions are asked on the reason for the change of status (including transfers within the same company and outplacement), and whether or not a change of residence took place as well. In most reports, however, transferees are not explicitly broken down according to whether or not they were also migrants.

Definition of Transfers:

Transfers within the same company (*dôitsu kigyônai idô*) include transfers between factories or offices owned by the same company plus persons going on to or returning from unpaid leave of absence, for whatever reason. Companies are explicitly asked how many employees have been outplaced (*shukkô*), carefully defined to include both temporary and permanent outplacements. In recent reports, the term *haichi tenkan* has also been used to describe all transfers within the same company.

Definition of Regions:

Northern Kantô includes Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Yamanashi and Nagano, Tôkai includes Gifu, Shizuoka, Aichi and Mie, Kinki includes Shiga, Nara and Wakayama, and Keihanshin includes Kyôto, Ôsaka and Hyôgo. Other districts are as conventionally defined.

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 3, 4 and 8.

Labour Ministry

Name of Survey:

Rôdô Keizai Dôkô Chôsa (Survey of Labour Market Trends).

Survey Reports:

The main report used for this thesis is: Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, Shôwa 61-nen Rôdô Keizai Dôkô Chôsa Hôkoku (Report of the 1986 Survey of Trends in the Labour Economy). (Tôkyô: Okurashô Insatsukyoku), 1987a.

Authority Responsible:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô Seisaku Chôsabû (Policy and Research Division, Ministry of Labour).

Target Populations:

Private companies with 30 or more employees.

Target Period:

Four times every year on the first day of February, May, August and November.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire.

Sample Size:

Around 4,100 companies, with sampling rates varying from 2/3 for companies with 1,000 or more employees to 1/84 for companies with 30-49 employees.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

This survey examines whether or not companies engaged in specific employment practices. No account is taken of whether or not these practices resulted in residential migration.

Definition of Transfers:

Until the third quarter of 1986 companies were asked whether they had implemented either permanent internal transfers (*haichi tenkan*) or outplacements (*shukkô*) during the quarter in question, without distinguishing which had been implemented (or both). From the third quarter of 1986 permanent internal transfers and outplacements have been listed separately. The word *tenkin* is also used in its broader sense, to include *haichi tenkan*.

Definition of Regions:

None.

Definition of Company Housing:

Issued housing (*kyûyo jûtaku*), which includes both company housing (*shataku*) and company dormitories (*dokushinryô*) which are either company-owned (*shoyû*) or company-leased (*kariage*).

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 4 and 7.

Labour Ministry

Name of Survey:

Tenkin to Kinrôsha Seikatsu ni kansuru Chôsa (Survey of Transfers and the Daily Life of Workers).

Survey Report:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, "Tenkin to tanshin funin: Tenkin to kinrôsha seikatsu ni kansuru chôsa kenkyûkai hôkoku (Transferees and workers living apart from their families: Research report on a survey of transfers and the daily life of workers)". Rôdô Jihô, Vol. 44, No. 5, 1991b, pp. 44-49.

Authority Responsible:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô Seisaku Chôsabû (Policy and Research Division, Ministry of Labour).

Target Population:

Employees of companies with 5,000 or more workers.

Target Period:

July 1990.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire.

Sample Size:

3120 individuals who had been subject to transfers involving a change of residence were chosen from 52 companies and 312 separate establishments operated by those companies. The response rates were 31.6% for individuals who had moved without their families, and 29.3% for those who had moved with their families.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Only transferees subject to job rotation (*tenkin*) included.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) involving a change of residence.

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 4.

Labour Ministry

Name of Survey:

Koyô Kanri Chôsa (Survey of Employment Management).

Survey Reports:

The results from this survey that have been used in this thesis are reported in: Rôdô Daijin Kanbô Seisaku Chôsabu, "Heisei 2-nen Koyô Kanri Chôsa (The 1990 Survey of Employment Management)". Rôdô Jihô, Vol. 43, No. 8, 1990b, pp. 52-55.

Authority Responsible:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô Seisaku Chôsabu (Policy and Research Division, Ministry of Labour).

Target Population:

All private companies with 30 or more regular employees in their headquarters.

Target Period:

Annual, covering the previous calendar year.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire.

Sample Size:

Around 6,000 companies.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

The survey concentrates on a different topic each year. The 1990 survey (covering calendar year 1989) asked companies whether or not they had implemented either *haichi tenkan* or *shukkô* transfers over the previous year, and in the case of the former, whether this had necessitated a change of residence for any employees. Migration, therefore, is defined as any change of residence.

Definition of Transfers:

An explicit distinction is made in the 1990 survey between permanent transfers (*haichi tenkan*) and outplacements (*shukkô*).

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 3.

Labour Ministry

Name of Survey:

Sangyô Rôdô Jijô Chôsa (Survey of Industrial Labour).

Survey Reports:

The results from this survey that have been used in this thesis are reported in: Rôdô Daijin Kanbô, "Shôwa 63-nen Sangyô Rôdô Jijô Chôsa Kekka Sokuhô (Preliminary Report on the 1988 Survey of Industrial Labour)". Rôdô Jihô, Vol. 42, No. 7, 1989, pp. 50-53.

Authority Responsible:

Rôdô Daijin Kanbô Seisaku Chôsabu (Policy and Research Division, Ministry of Labour).

Target Population:

Companies with 100 or more regular employees in 46 industrial sectors.

Target Period:

September 1985-September 1988.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire.

Sample Size:

Around 4,500 companies.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Companies were asked if they had implemented *haichi tenkan* or *shukkô* transfers under certain circumstances, but whether this had involved staff in residential mobility was not investigated. Migration, therefore, is not explicitly recorded.

Definition of Transfers:

Companies were asked if they had implemented *haichi tenkan* or *shukkô* transfers.

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 4.

Management and Coordination Agency

Name of Survey:

Jûtaku Tôkei Chôsa (Housing Survey of Japan).

Survey Report:

Sômuchô, Shôwa 58-nen Jûtaku Tôkei Chôsa Hôkoku (Report of the Results of the 1983 Housing Survey of Japan). Volume 1, Part 2 (Tôkyô: Sômuchô Tôkeikyoku), 1985

Sômuchô, Shôwa 58-nen Jûtaku Tôkei Chôsa no Kaisetsu (Summary of the Results of the 1983 Housing Survey of Japan). (Tôkyô: Sômuchô Tôkeikyoku), 1986

Authority Responsible:

Sômuchô Tôkeikyoku (Statistics Bureau, Management and Coordination Agency, Government of Japan).

Target Population:

All Japanese Households.

Target Period:

1978 - 1982.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire.

Sample Size:

1%.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Selection of the (one) main reason for changing residence from a pre-determined list.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) is one of the items on a pre-determined list.

Definition of Regions:

Transferee households are listed by prefecture.

Definition of Company Housing:

Issued housing (*kyujô Jûtaku*), which includes dwellings owned or administered by public bodies or private companies which are rented to their officials or workers in order to meet the needs of the work or rented as a part of salaries and wages.

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 4 and 7.

Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications

Name of Survey:

Tanshin Funinsha no Seikatsu ya, Kazoku to no Komyunikêshion Shudan ni kansuru Chôsa (A survey of the daily life of workers living apart from their families and of their methods of communicating with their families).

Survey Reports:

Yûseishô, "Tanshin funinsha no seikatsu jittai ni kansuru chôsa (A survey of the daily life of workers living apart from their families). Rôsei Jihô, No. 2899, 1988, pp. 67-70.

Authority Responsible:

Yûseishô Yûmukyoku Sâbisu Kaihatsuka (Services Development Section, Postal Administration Bureau, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications).

Target Population:

Workers in 1000 branch offices of companies listed on the upper section of the stock exchange, located in metropolitan cities and prefectural capitals, who declared themselves to be partial migrants.

Target Period:

March 1988.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire sent to three workers in each branch office.

Sample Size:

667 persons.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Self-declared partial migrants only.

Definition of Transfers:

Not explicit.

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 8.

National Land Agency

Name of Survey:

Jinkô Idô Yôin Chôsa (Survey of the Causes of Population Migration).

Survey Reports

Kokudochô, Wagakuni no Jinkô Idô no Jittai (The Actuality of Population Migration in Japan). (Tôkyô: Okurashô Insatsukyoku), 1982.

Authority Responsible:

Kokudochô Keikaku Chôseikyoku (Planning and Control Bureau, National Land Agency).

Target Population:

Individuals who registered a change of residence across a municipal boundary under the provisions of the Residents Registration Law, and who were between the ages of 15 and 74.

Target Period:

July 1980 - June 1981.

Data Collection Method:

Self-administered questionnaire delivered and collected by hand.

Sample Size:

The target sample size was 7,000 and the actual sample size was 5,206 with a response rate of 74%.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Selection of the (one) main reason for changing residence from a pre-determined list, plus multiple selection of subsidiary reasons.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) are outplacement (*shukkô*) together constitute one of the items on a pre-determined list.

Definition of Regions:

Tôhoku consists of the six conventional prefectures plus Niigata. Kantô consists of the seven conventional prefectures plus Yamanashi. Tôkai consists of Shizuoka, Aichi, Mie, Gifu and Nagano. Hokuriku consists of Toyama, Ishikawa and Fukui. Other districts are as conventionally defined.

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 1, 3 and 4.

Personnel Management Agency

Name of Survey:

Kokka kômuin no tanshin funin nado no jittai chôsa (Survey of living apart from the family amongst public employees).

Survey Reports:

Jinjiin, "Kokka kômuin no tanshin funin nado no jittai chôsa kekka ni tsuite (On the results of a survey of living apart from the family amongst public employees)". Jinjiin Geppô, December 1985, pp. 14-19.

Authority Responsible:

Jinjiin (Personnel Management Agency).

Target Population:

All 505,757 public servants as of January 1985

Target Period:

January 1984 - January 1985.

Data Collection Method:

Unclear.

Sample Size:

100%.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Persons who moved residence at the time of a new posting.

Definition of Transfers:

New posting (*jinji idô*).

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 8.

Shimane Prefecture

Name of Survey:

Jinkô Idô Chôsa (Survey of Population Migration).

Survey Reports:

This is an annual survey. Details of the 1987 survey are as follows, and all data recorded here are for 1987 unless otherwise stated:

Shimane-ken, Shimane-ken no Idô Jinkô: Shôwa 62-nen (The Migrant Population of Shimane Prefecture: 1987). (Matsue: Shimane-ken Kikakubu Tôkeika), 1988.

Authority Responsible:

Shimane-ken Kikakubu Tôkeika (Statistics Section, Planning Division, Shimane Prefecture).

Target Population:

Individuals who registered a change of residence with Shimane Prefecture under the provisions of the Residents Registration Law.

Target Period:

October 1986 - September 1987. The same period is employed in previous years.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire completed at the time of registration.

Sample Size:

100%.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Selection of the (one) main reason for changing residence from a pre-determined list. Dependents are listed as a separate category.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) is one of the items on a pre-determined list, and an explanatory note in the survey reports that this is to be taken as any form of mobility "within the same enterprise" (*dôitsu kigyônai*).

Definition of Regions:

Chûbu consists of Tôkai, Tôsan and Hokuriku as conventionally defined. Kyûshû includes Okinawa. All other regions are as conventionally defined.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 4.

Social Survey Research Institute

Name of Survey:

Tenkin to kinrôsha seikatsu ni kansuru chôsa (Survey of the daily life of transferees and other employees).

Survey Reports:

Materials extracted from this survey's report have been obtained from: Rôdô Seisaku Chôsabû, "Tenkin to tanshin funin (Personnel transfers and living apart from the family)". Rôdô Jihô, Vol. 44, No. 5, 1991, pp. 46-49.

Authority Responsible:

Shakai Chôsa Kenkyûjo (KK) (Social Survey Research Institute Ltd.).

Target Population:

Workers in private companies with 5,000 or more employees, who have families.

Target Period:

1990

Data Collection Method:

For each of 52 such companies, 6 branch offices were selected, and within each office, six employees who had undertaken partial migration, and six who had taken their families with them, were eligible for inclusion, making a target of 3,120 individuals in all, each of whom received a questionnaire

Sample Size:

493 partial migrants (31.6% of the target), and 458 full migrants (29.3% of the target).

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Persons who moved residence at the time of a new posting.

Definition of Transfers:

New posting (*jinji idô*).

Definition of Regions:

None.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 8.

Tôkyô Metropolitan Government

Name of Survey:

Ijû Kankyô nado Idô Riyûbetsu Jinkô Chôsa (Survey of Reasons for Migration amongst the Population, including the Residential Environment).

Survey Reports:

This survey has been conducted four times at regular five-year intervals, but the first survey (in 1971) was based on only one month's migration, and thus its results are not really comparable. The other reports are as follows:

1. Tôkyô-to, Tôkyô-to no Jinkô Idô no Jittai: Shôwa 51-nen (The Actuality of Population Migration in Metropolitan Tokyo: 1976). (Tôkyô: Tôkyô-to Sômukyoku Tôkeibu), 1978.
2. Tôkyô-to, Tôkyô-to no Jinkô Idô no Jittai: Shôwa 56-nen (The Actuality of Population Migration in Metropolitan Tokyo: 1981). (Tôkyô: Tôkyô-to Sômukyoku Tôkeibu), 1983.
3. Tôkyô-to, Tôkyô-to no Jinkô Idô no Jittai: Shôwa 61-nen (The Actuality of Population Migration in Metropolitan Tokyo: 1986). (Tôkyô: Tôkyô-to Sômukyoku Tôkeibu), 1988.

Authority Responsible:

Tôkyô-to Sômukyoku Tôkeibu (Statistics Division, General Affairs Bureau, Tôkyô Metropolitan Government).

Target Population:

Individuals who registered a change of residence with Tôkyô Metropolitan Government under the provisions of the Residents Registration Law.

Target Period:

January-December of the year in question.

Data Collection Method:

Postal questionnaire.

Sample Size:

For movement in and out of Metropolitan Tôkyô during 1976, the target sample size was 56,172 (or 4.8% of the target migrant population), and the actual sample size was 35,583, with a response rate of 55%. Similar statistics hold for the 1981 and 1986 surveys.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Selection of the (one) main reason for changing residence from a pre-determined list.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) is one of the items on a pre-determined list, and an explanatory note in the survey reports that this is to be understood as migration undertaken to assume a new position with the same employer.

Definition of Regions:

Five regions are identified: Hokkaidô/Tôhoku (7 prefectures), Northern Kantô (3 prefectures), Southern Kantô (3 prefectures other than Metropolitan Tôkyô), Chûbu/Kinki (16 prefectures, including all of Hôkuriku, Tôkai, Tôsan and Kinki), and Chûgoku/Shikoku/Kyûshû (17 prefectures, including Okinawa). All component districts are as conventionally defined.

Definition of Company Housing:

Company housing and dwellings for government officials (*shataku to kômuin jûtaku*).

References in this Thesis:

Chapters 1, 3, 4 and 7.

Yamaguchi Prefecture

Name of Survey:

Jinkô Idô Tôkei Chôsa (Statistical Survey of Population Migration).

Survey Reports:

This is an annual survey. Details of the 1987 survey are as follows, and all data recorded here are for 1987 unless otherwise stated:

Yamaguchi-ken, Shôwa 62-nen Yamaguchi-ken Jinkô Idô Tôkei Chôsa Kekka Hôkokusho (Report on the 1987 Statistical Survey of Population Migration in Yamaguchi Prefecture). (Yamaguchi: Yamaguchi-ken Kikakubu Tôkeika), 1988.

Authority Responsible:

Yamaguchi-ken Kikakubu Tôkeika (Statistics Section, Planning Division, Yamaguchi Prefecture).

Target Population:

Individuals who registered a change of residence with Yamaguchi Prefecture under the provisions of the Residents Registration Law.

Target Period:

January 1987 - December 1987. The same period is employed in previous years.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire completed at the time of registration.

Sample Size:

100%.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Selection of the (one) main reason for changing residence from a pre-determined list. Dependents are listed as a separate category.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) is one of the items on a pre-determined list, and an explanatory note in the survey reports that this is to be understood as migration undertaken to assume a new position with the same employer.

Definition of Regions:

Within/beyond Yamaguchi Prefecture only.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 4.

Yamanashi Prefecture

Name of Survey:

Tôjû Jinkô Chôsa (Survey of the Resident Population).

Survey Reports:

This is an annual survey, but the author could only obtain access to the 1977 report. Details of the 1977 survey are as follows, and all data recorded here are for 1977:

Yamanashi-ken, Yamanashi-ken Tôjû Jinkô Chôsa Kekka Hôkoku: Shôwa 52-nendô (Report on the 1977 Statistical Survey of the Resident Population of Yamaguchi Prefecture). (Kôfu: Yamanashi-ken Sômubu Tôkeika), 1978.

Authority Responsible:

Yamanashi-ken Kikakubu Tôkeika (Statistics Section, General Affairs Division, Yamanashi Prefecture).

Target Population:

Individuals who registered a change of residence with Yamanashi Prefecture under the provisions of the Residents Registration Law.

Target Period:

October 1976 - September 1977.

Data Collection Method:

Questionnaire completed at the time of registration.

Sample Size:

100%.

Method of Determining Cause of Migration:

Selection of the (one) main reason for changing residence from a pre-determined list. Dependents are listed as a separate category.

Definition of Transfers:

Job rotation (*tenkin*) is one of the items on a pre-determined list.

Definition of Regions:

Transfers are listed by prefecture of origin/destination.

References in this Thesis:

Chapter 4.

Appendix B Notes on the organizational structure of the Japanese Ministry of Labour

The structure shown in Figure 5.1 is a very selective and partial view of the Ministry of Labour's operations: each of the central bureaux should be sub-divided into sections and sub-sections, with the same true at both the prefectural and local branch levels. In 1984; the year to which Figure 5.1 refers, the Ministry had some 22,679 employees spread across this operational network.

At each level in the Ministry's operations there are to be found employees of various ranks, some occupying unique positions, others sharing a common designation. Considerable detail of the complement of staff at the central and prefectural levels is available from the annual Shokuinroku directory published by the Ministry of Finance. The following information has been extracted from the 1989 edition of the Shokuinroku, and will serve to illustrate typical staffing practices.

Employment Security Bureau: Administrative Affairs Section

The senior staff of this section in 1989 included:

- One Section Chief
- Four Deputy Section Chiefs
- Two Senior Managers
- Nine Chief Clerks (Sub-Section Chiefs)
- One Chief Inspector
- Nine Inspectors

Total: 26

Miyagi Prefecture: Commerce, Industry and Labour Division: Employment Security Section

The senior staff of this section in 1989 included:

- One Section Chief
- One Deputy Section Chief
- One Senior Managers
- Six Chief Clerks (Sub-Section Chiefs)
- Six Inspectors

Total: 15

The Ministry's organizational structure was reorganized several times during the period covered by the SAK data set (1975-89), but this mainly involved the reallocation of sections between bureaux and similar measures: the fundamental pattern of bureaux, section, sub-section etc. and the categories of staff to be found within remained unchanged.

Appendix C Some sources which include information on personnel transfers within the Japanese Ministry of Labour

1. Shokugyô Antei Kôhô

This is a journal published three times each month by the Koyô Mondai Kenkyûkai on behalf of the Ministry of Labour's Employment Security Bureau. Lists of the latest reshufflings of staff (*jinji idô*) within the Ministry's headquarters, and between the headquarters and prefectural offices, are published on a frequent basis, and similar lists are published for movements within each prefecture on or about April 1 each year. The most junior staff included in the headquarters lists are those who have just vacated the post of sub-section chief (*kakarichô*), while at the prefectural level the most junior staff recorded are branch managers in small local Public Employment Security Offices. These records form the basis of the computerized "SAK data set" employed in Chapter 5. Each record lists the date of the transfer, the name of the individual concerned, details of the post being vacated (e.g. Section Chief, Employment Security Section, Wakayama Prefecture), and details of the new post (e.g. Deputy Section Chief, International Labour Section, Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of Labour). A sequence of records allows the career profile of a particular individual to be built up, or for the passage of individuals through a particular post to be monitored. It is also possible to trace simultaneous chains by correlating origins and destinations of moves taking place on the same day.

2. Rôdôshô Meikan

A "Who's Who" of senior staff in the Ministry of Labour published in 1989 in Tôkyô by the company Jihyôsha. Coverage is of senior staff in each bureau as of that year, and includes a large number of technical staff as well as career bureaucrats. Records give the name of each individual (and a photograph for the most senior), the date and prefecture of birth, the university (and faculty) from which the individual graduated, the year in which he entered service in the Ministry, and his present home address and telephone number. Postings are listed in sequential order, but the early career is ignored: the most junior post included for career bureaucrats is that of section chief in a prefectural Employment Security Section. There are no data on the careers of senior staff at the prefectural level, but there is a complete list of Public Employment Security Offices.

3. Seikai - Kanchô Jinjiroku

This is an annual directory of very senior Japanese government staff published by the company Tôyô Keizai Shimpôsha, also published occasionally under the title Seikan Yonkihô. Entries are confined to persons who have achieved the rank of section chief in the Ministry's headquarters or something higher, or who are bureau chiefs at the prefectural level. As with the Rôdôshô Meikan, each record gives the name of the individual, the date and prefecture of birth, the university (and faculty) from which he graduated, the year in which he entered service in the Ministry, and his present home address and telephone number. There is no information on postings, although these can be detected easily by comparing sequential issues of the directory.

4. Shokuinroku

An annual directory (in two massive volumes, and now on CD-ROM as well) of government staff at the central ministerial, prefectural and local levels, published by the Finance Ministry, which simply gives the title of each post and the name of the individual who currently occupies it. As with the Seikai - Kanchô Jinjiroku, there is no information on postings, but these can be detected by comparing sequential volumes. Entries are confined to persons who have achieved the rank of sub-section chief (*kakarichô*) in the Ministry's headquarters or something higher, sub-section chief in a prefectural headquarters, or branch manager in a local Public Employment Security Office.

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